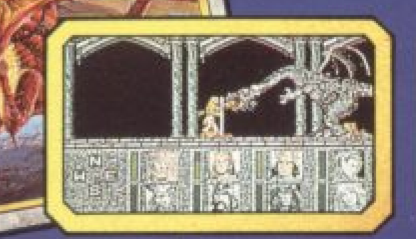


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The Games machine

contents

REGULARS

7
NEWS 'N' PREVIEWS
Doing massive business in the States, Ghostbusters 2 will be here soon, and so will Activision's official game. TGM has the exclusive preview, plus all the major forthcoming games.

26
ROBIN CANDY'S PLAYING TIPS
That massive strategy RPG-er, Battletech gets the full treatment, along with Super Mario Bros 2

63
PBM UPDATE
We run down some of the best games to be playing and review the exciting new Super Vorcon Wars

68
ADVENTURE ■ STRATEGY ■ RPG
Rumours abound — have Infocom gone? TGM gets to the bottom of the story with a happy ending and reviews the latest games including Mindscape's amazing Fire Brigade

77
REVIEWS
Top-flight thrills from Psygnosis, with Shadow of the Beast, Imageworks with Xenon 2, Activision with Dynamite Dux and US Gold with Strider among many more in TGM's industry-standard reviews

FEATURES

13
IMAGINATION WORKSHOP

24
MEL'S LAW
Following on from the horrors of catching VDUs, Mel Croucher expounds on just how dangerous computers can really be

61
LICENSED TO SELL
A View to a Kill and Friday the 13th looked like jokes some years ago, but no-one's laughing at Domark's current rush of successes. We talk to the real-life Bonds behind Licence to Kill

CENTRE BYTES

31
THE ARTS OF NOISE

36
COMMS — ART THROBS
The plague of bulletin boards, pornography, leads Zog into some speculation, investigation and...

44
16-BIT HARDWARE GUIDE
Everything you should know when it comes to selecting a system

52
GOING PUBLIC
Public domain software's reputation is in the doldrums, yet there are some tremendous programs to be had. Sorting out the chaff from the wheat becomes easy with TGM's special guide to the best

PLUS
39 Infodesk ■ **42** Independent repair services ■ **48** Toolbox — the latest releases ■ **50** Classified Ads ■ **56** Readerpage — your letters ■ **58** Mel's Trivia Quiz and Competition Results

COMPETITION

66
8-bit and 16-bit prizes galore from Code Masters on the TGM 0898 Hotline



No hanging around at TGM — if you're an Amiga owner you'll want SHADOW OF THE BEAST from Psygnosis — and we tell you why on PAGE 78

THE ARTS OF NOISE

Anyone can be a reasonable musician today with MIDI and computers. TGM's first musical installment provides the essential beginners' guide to MIDI and MIDI instruments at an acceptable budget, starting in Centre Bytes on PAGE 31

IMAGINATION WORKSHOP

THE MOST EXCITING NEW DEVELOPMENT IN LEISURE COMPUTING FOR YEARS

We introduce the first of a series of quarterly supplements from America, specially commissioned and designed in New York by TGM's American correspondent Marshal M Rosenthal. Imagination Workshop is more than just a supplement, however, it's a magazine within TGM devoted to the latest developments in computer games design, written and illustrated by highly specialised experts who bring their own uniquely American slant to this exciting games world. It's the biggest publishing event in five years — and it starts on **PAGE 13**

Blood Money









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NEWS 'N' PREVIEWS

STUFF THAT HAPPENED — STUFF THAT WILL

The Archie is back!

And this time it's bringing some software

Acorn were so keen to push the latest addition to the Archimedes range, the A3000 (£649.95), as an all-round family machine that they organised a games conference for it. 30 top software houses attended — showing the intense interest in the potential of the RISC-based, 32-bit micro.

Companies that attended included the likes of Ocean, US Gold, Virgin Mastertronic, Activision, Domark and Electronic Arts. After being shown the machine's potential the representatives were asked for their opinions. Would they, or wouldn't they go Archie?

Gary Bracey (Ocean): 'It's a lovely machine and I'm sure we will be doing something for it. From what I have seen and learned today, the A3000 deserves only our highest profile titles such as Batman and The Untouchables.'

Steve Clark (Virgin Mastertronic): 'We can't fault the A3000... The next stage will be to undertake a pilot project for it.'

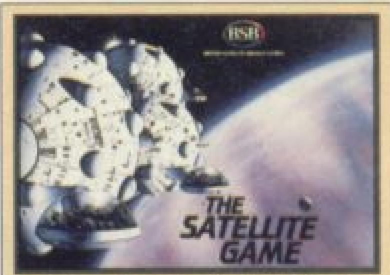
John Cavanagh (Domark): 'We are currently working on both Trivial Pursuit and Hard Drivin' for the A3000... In fact we're hoping to have a demo version of Hard Drivin' ready for the PC Show. Running four times faster than any other format, it will be our flagship.' Considering the amount of interest created by the A3000, TGM reckons it's time for a reappraisal of the Super Beeb. Look out for a feature on the prospects of the Archimedes next issue.

Code Masters hit rock bottom

In a shock move this month, Code Masters announced the launch of a new 16-bit budget label. The new 16-bit budget price has been set by the price-busting company at a mere £5.99. But will Coders be producing any more full-price 16-bit software? They say not, because they recognise that it would be ludicrous to pay £20 for a game with the depth of, say, Treasure Island Dizzy.

The first range of games, available at the end of September, features a repackaged Stuntman, renamed Nitro Boost Championship, and the 16-bit version of the Oliver twins' Treasure Island Dizzy. This news comes just after The Edge's announcement of their new budget range (consisting mainly of rereleases) with a 16-bit price of a whopping £9.99. The label's called Rad.

Code Masters also have a new piece of hardware up their sleeves for Christmas. Rumours abound, but the only piece of information with the slightest bit of credibility seems to point to a system that allows selected computers to load games from a CD unit. Although this is similar to the system created by Rainbow Arts for the C64, and Code Masters say that their project has never been done before and could only be accomplished by people with minds as young and energetic as their own. Mmmm... back to the drawing board.



Broadsword TV Productions (creators of Knightmare) would like to cordially invite readers between the ages of 11 and 16 to write to the following address if they wish to be considered for The Satellite Game (designed by Incentive using Freescape), to be broadcast next year on BSB. Hurry, as the first interviews take place in October.

Broadsword Television Productions: Anglia TV, Anglia House, Norwich NR1 3JG.

Hire, hire Lower, lower

The recently-launched video computer magazine, Action Screenplay, will now be available for hire in normal video retail outlets.

Originally you could only buy a copy from software shops but as Producer Jon Beales puts it: 'As most people do not tend to collect videos or go back to them time and time again, in the way they do with magazines, we felt renting out Action Screenplay through video libraries and computer stores was a more viable method to the sales technique.'



Initially priced at £4.99, many felt it was far too expensive for a computer magazine, but at around £1.50 a hire for a 90-minute video dealing with all computer game related information it may prove more popular. However, they are leaving the 'detailed analysis of games and industry developments to the press.' Action Screenplay is intended to give the viewer the look and sound of the latest games — an accompaniment to traditional computer magazines.

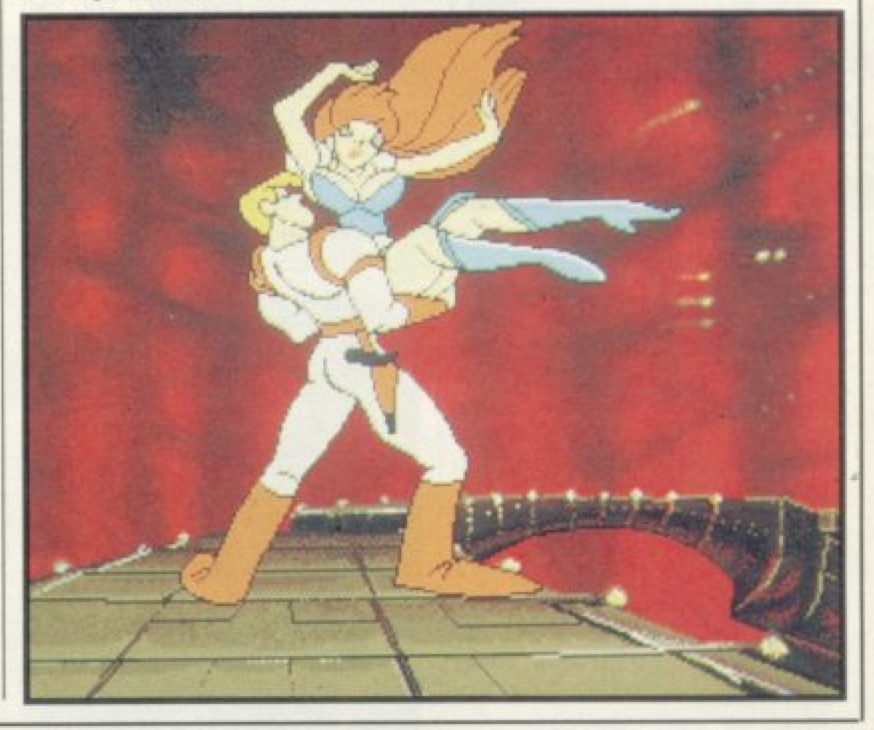
Abracadabra

Quicker than you can say 'Where's Destiny Software gone?' along come another bunch of young hopefuls. This month's new software house is Digital Magic Software (DMS). Although, strictly speaking, they've been around since February (but you've never heard of them till now, have you?) when they produced Scorpion, DMS believe their latest game, Drivin' Force (please note that it is now trendy to omit the 'g' from driving, as in Hard Drivin'), heralds a new era for themselves.

DMS hope to launch the Amiga version of Drivin' Force in November, followed by the ST in January 1990. Planned for next February is a helicopter shoot-'em-up which boasts to be the best thing outside of the arcades. We'll wait and see.

Dragon's Lair II

Whilst zooming around the latest Amiga Expo in Chicago, Marshal M Rosenthal gained the first look at the sequel to Readysoft's Dragon's Lair, entitled Space Ace. He reckons the demo looks fantastic and also notes that the Atari ST version of Dragon's Lair is almost complete. More information in the report on the Amiga Expo next month.



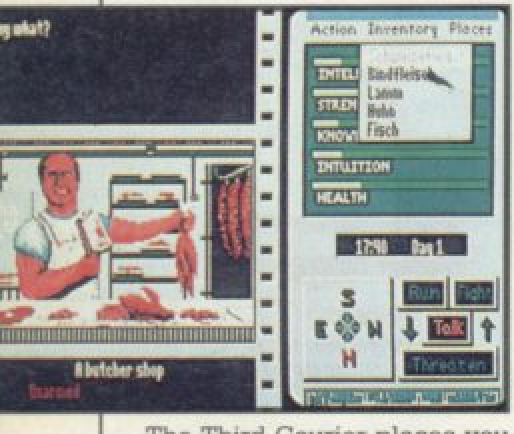
Accolades galore!

The American simulations giant, California-based Accolade, have just announced their latest batch of releases, available to the end of the year. (All will only be available on the PC initially, unless stated. All PC screens.)

Probably the most interesting of Accolade's new releases are the three roleplaying/adventures — new ground for Accolade.



Conspiracy: The Deadlock Files places you on the streets of New York amongst the many landmarks that Marshal Rosenthal knows so well. The adventure features over 500 digitised, television-quality pictures of NYC, supporting all graphics cards. In the game, you are embroiled in a murder investigation in which you must prove your innocence. Pursued by the FBI, CIA, and even the KGB, you must uncover the frame-up and expose the real killers.



The Third Courier places you in Berlin (East and West). As a secret agent you must find three pieces of the NATO defence plan, and stop the third courier before he takes them to Moscow. The game features an innovative Character Creator, which allows each game to be completely different. Many major sound boards are also supported.

When you enter the world's most haunted house, Don't Go Alone. Your father has been banished to St Nicholson's home for the mentally insane for believing his house is 'occupied' by someone other than him. With a group of your friends you must enter the spirited home of your father and prove it's haunted — thus proving your father sane. Remember, Don't Go Alone, in autumn.

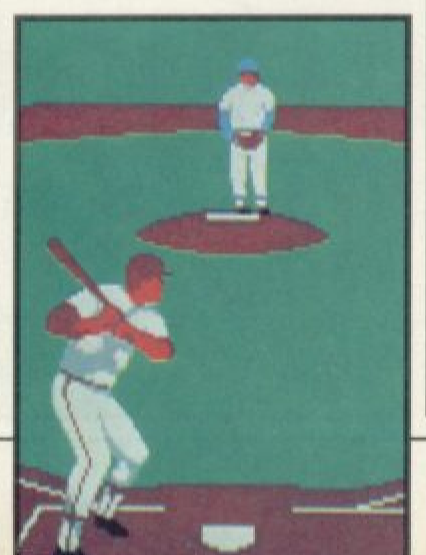


Accolade have simulated tanks, jets, warships and even trains before, but never have they thought of helicopters, motorcycles and powerboats — until now.

The Cycles (which also comes out on the C64 and Amiga in winter) is different from most motorcycle race games in that it places you right behind the handle bars of the bike (it was developed by the same people that wrote the Test Drive series). This potentially thrilling simulation takes you around 15 of the world's most gruelling circuits in three classes (125cc, 250cc and 500cc) with five difficulty levels.

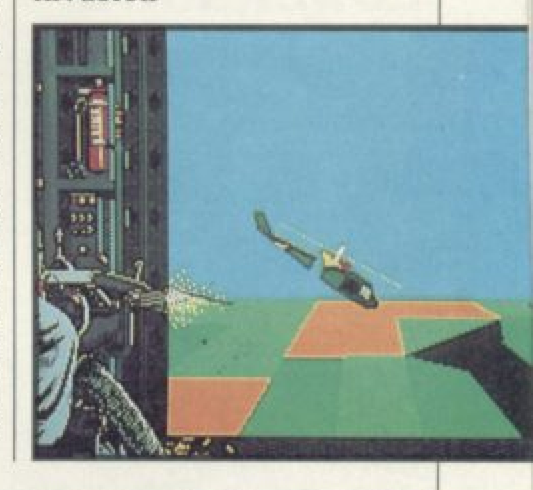
Ever wished you had the chance to experience the thrills and spills of offshore superboat racing, as seen on Miami Vice? Well, wait no longer. Accolade's Heat Wave puts the player at the helm of a 600 HP superboat capable of speeds exceeding 200mph. If in-boat heroics prove too much you can always take to a helicopter for an overhead view.

And talking of helicopters, how about a Huey HU-1? Eye of the Storm allows you to 'experience the historic battles of the Vietnam War' — not sure that's a good idea, really. Unlike normal heli sims, Eye of the Storm puts you through rigorous training before you're even let near a helicopter (no more of those annoying crash takeoffs before you start your mission). Zooming over the 3-D filled-polygon landscape you encounter enemy choppers, tanks, boats, trucks and trains. There's ten missions, so no slacking!



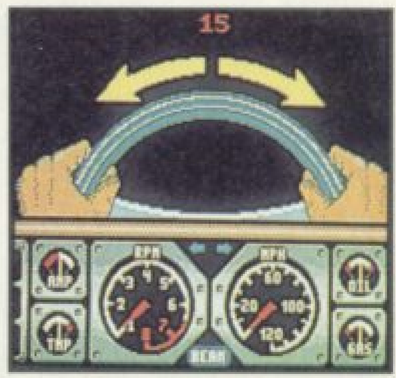
Finally, staying with all-American action, we come to HardBall II. The sequel contains all the attractive features of the original plus a touch more strategy with player-drafting, league matches and replays to help you scrutinise each play in detail. HardBall II also boasts some amazingly realistic animation sequences. (Also available for the Amiga in winter.)

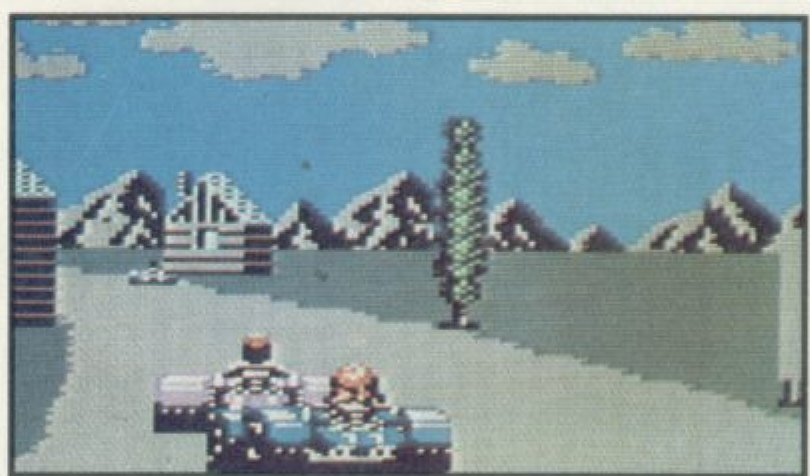
Accolade onslaught (clockwise from above): Eye of the Storm, The Third Courier, Conspiracy, Don't Go Alone and HardBall II ready for an autumn invasion



The big two

Yes, folks, here they are, the first two Christmas number one contenders revealing themselves to us. In the blue corner we have Activision's conversion of the hit coin-op Power Drift on the Commodore 64. While in the red corner there's Domark's tremendously addictive Atari ST conversion of Tengen's Hard Drivin'. Christmas comes early this year!





The art of Arts

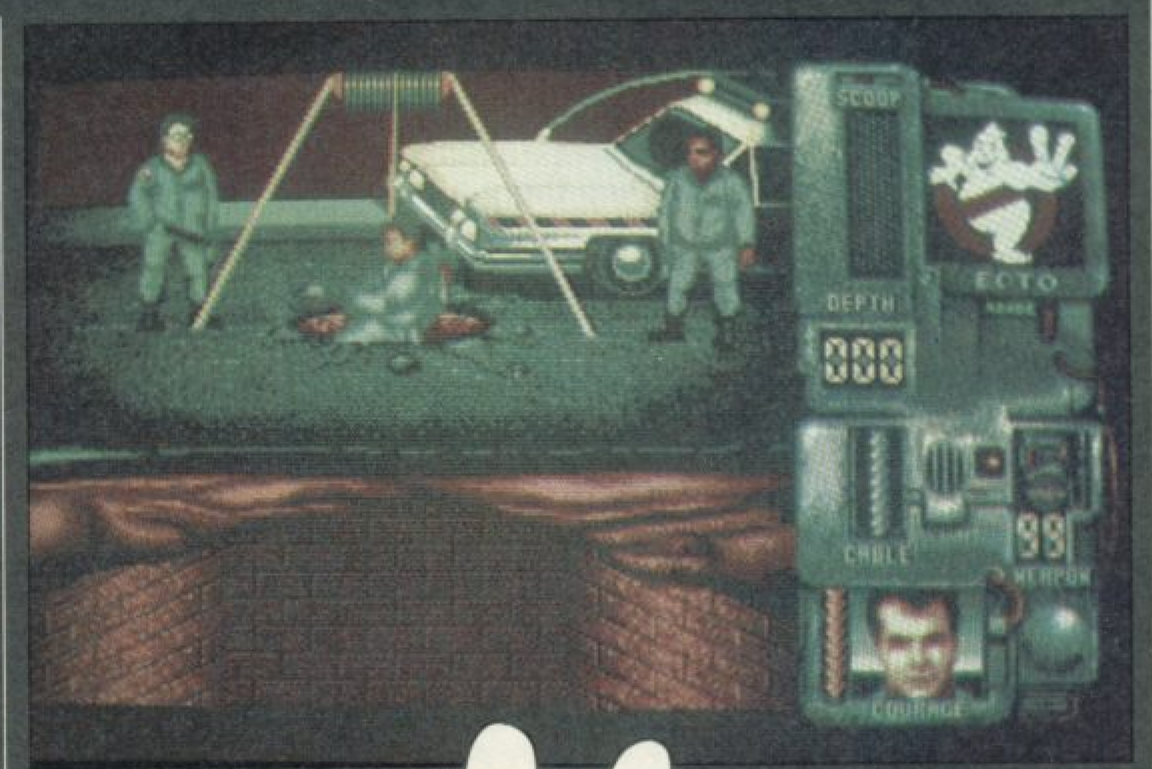
You can always be sure that the next Electronic Arts release is going to tax the mind as much as the wrist.

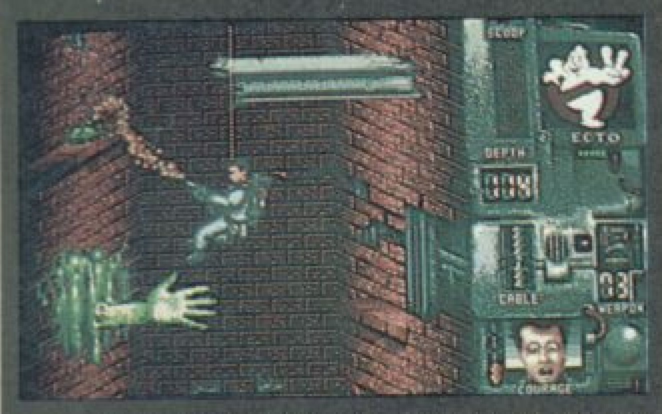
Based on HP Lovecraft's Cthulhu writings, comes The Hound of Shadow. The world in which we exist may seem simple from the outside, but dig deeper into the community and you find strange and unpleasant things that lurk just beyond the barriers of reality. Based in the Roaring Twenties you must find out about these weird and wicked activities by infiltrating the underground organisations and exposing the perpetrators. ST, Amiga and PC versions to be released early November. (Amiga screen.)



Grossbusters™

When the film Ghostbusters came out in 1984 it was the highest-grossing comedy ever. It still holds that box-office record. When the computer game followed a few months later it became the best-selling computer game ever (selling over two million). It, too, still holds that record.





The Ghostbusters (especially Bill Murray, who played Venkman) promised themselves that the film would be a one-off — the first and the last. Luckily for the fans, Columbia (whose future rests on the success of the film) persuaded the original team of Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd, Harold Ramis, Sigourney Weaver and Rick Moranis to return to produce a sequel, again under the direction of Ivan Reitman (recently successful with Twins). Perhaps unfortunately, Activision couldn't provide the same miracles and the illustrious David Crane won't be coding the sequel.

Software Studios have the enviable task of producing the computer game of the film sequel. Ghostbusters 2 — The Computer Game is to be released two months after the film, in November. The game is specifically designed to be an accurate translation of the film plot. The film gives some clues as to the aim of the game.

It's the end of a decade and the inhabitants of New York City are about to pay for the negative, careless thoughts abounding about the streets of their city. For when the amount of thoughts reaches a certain level it awakens the jelly-like goo that was simmering below the surface in Ghostbusters.

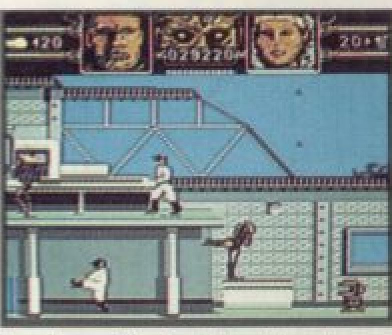
Now it's up to the (cue fanfare) Ghostbusters to come out of retirement and round up all the ghouls and ghosts that proliferate from this spreading substance before they take over the city. This involves scouring ever part of the city streets, even going down the drains into the sewers, using cable to get to those difficult places. Although you're equipped with a backpackful of goodies time is running out. See the film in September then play the game in November (available on all formats, ST pictured), and don't forget you've only got till New Year's Eve to complete it.

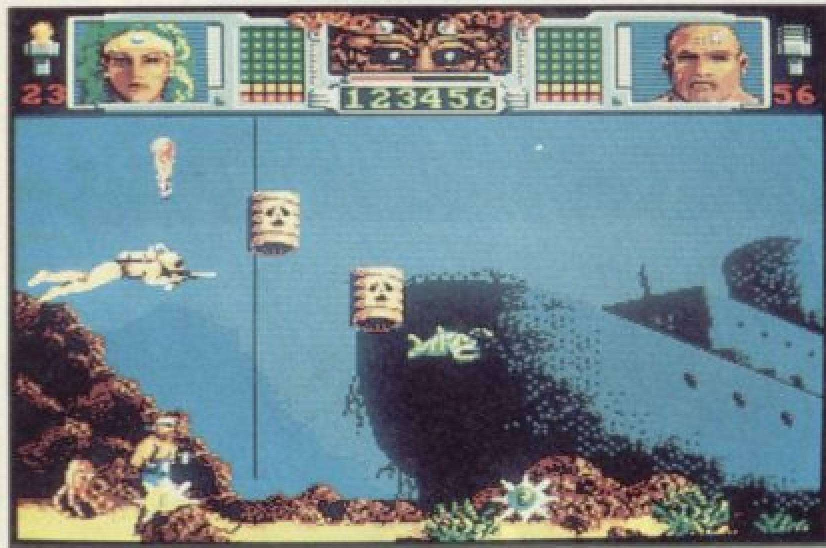




Time for a sharp entry

Vivid Image Developments were formed in September 1988. You'd be forgiven for thinking that they'd joined the nameless compilation of software houses which had died at birth. However, you'd be very wrong. Vivid Image was formed by two programmers and a graphic artist — and that's what makes them a bit different





There's an old adage in the software industry that programmers make bad salesmen, and salesmen make bad programmers. What a heaven life would be if managing directors could recognise a bad game when they saw one, and if programmers would know when to stop programming and when to start selling. The ideal software house would be formed by people who understood the complexities of programming but could also balance the books. Vivid Image may be just that company.

Although Vivid Image was formed by programmers Mev Dinc and John Twiddy, and graphic artist Hugh Riley a year ago (they met during the production of Last Ninja 2) they had never planned to sell their game to the press — let alone the public — until they knew it was close to completion. They also wanted to produce their games on the best, and most viable, computer formats available. (There's nothing more fun for a programmer than getting to grips with the latest hardware — thus the support of the Konix Multi System.) It was only now that they would let members of the press see all the formats of their debut game together (not so much to compare, but rather to show off Vivid Image's excellence in programming on every format). The game? Hammerfist, an arcade adventure that is playable yet challenging, inviting and addictive.

Despite the limitations of each machine (even the Konix has such restrictions) each version contains exactly the same graphical content (in terms of objects) and strategic elements as any other.

The game takes place on a planet where every object and person is a hologram. The controlling body on this planet is the awesome Centro Holographix who produce fighters to keep order over the volatile inhabitants. Due to a malfunction in production two of the peace-keepers have been output in one hologram. Two personalities living in one body. Not surprisingly, on finding this out the hologram is set on finding a way to split the personalities and revert to normal existence. You take the part of this hologram and must find your way back to Centro Holographix, set yourselves free, and wreak vengeance on the three all-powerful masters of the company.

Although controlling one





MEV DINC
Formerly a Z80 programmer and now working exclusively on 16-bit (currently programming the Konix version of Hammerfist). Mev has previously worked on Gerry the Germ ('my bank manager liked it,' Mev notes), Prodigy, Knightmare, Enduro Racer (Amstrad only) and, of course, Last Ninja 2. Mev is also a co-founder and Chairman of the Society of Software Authors (and still drives a clapped out BMW!).



JOHN TWIDDY
One of the most well-known, respected and likeable C64 programmers around. He is currently working on the Commodore version of Hammerfist, and has previously programmed Last Ninjas 1 and 2, Tau Ceti and Ikari Warriors. Sadly, this is John's final C64 game, from now on he's moving onto the 16-bits.



HUGH RILEY
All-round graphics artist, Hugh has contributed his pixelated pictures to Bangkok Knights, Predator, Dominator and Last Ninjas 1 and 2.

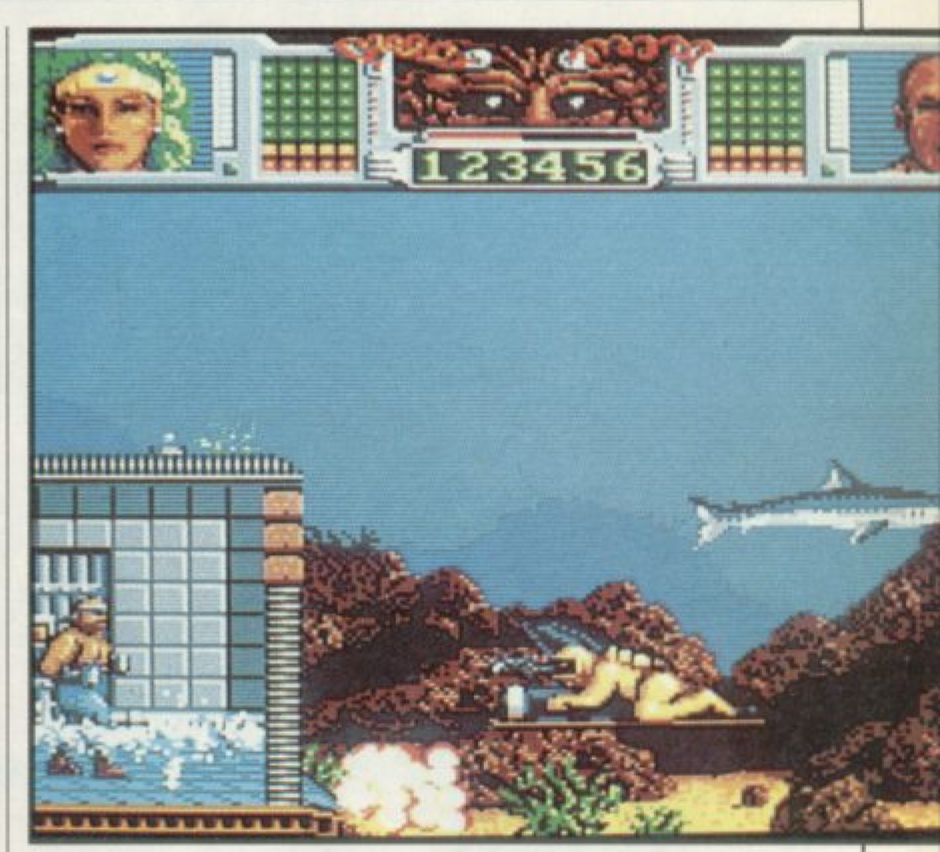


graphic, you have the abilities of two characters. Your one persona, Hammerfist, is strong — being equipped with a metal fist, thus the name — but also a slow and clumsy fellow. While your other side, Metalasis, is a nimble and agile young lady but no match for the brutish inhabitants. By flicking your character from one persona to another it is possibly to progress past the obstacles and onto freedom. Despite you only having one life, it is possible to exist for ages. This is due to the fact that while you are using, say, Hammerfist, Metalasis is always being topped up with energy. But leave her resting for too long and she'll overload with energy and lose it all. Constant changing is a necessity.

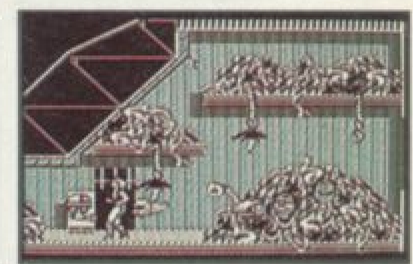
You start your quest in an undersea dome, occupied by all sorts of beautiful, but deadly, creatures. When you kill one of these annoying little animals a fizzle appears. Most fizzles are good for you (adding energy or weapons), but one is positively bad, so be careful! As with all the three levels, the first is 16 flicked screens long. With each level culminating in an end-of-load baddie.

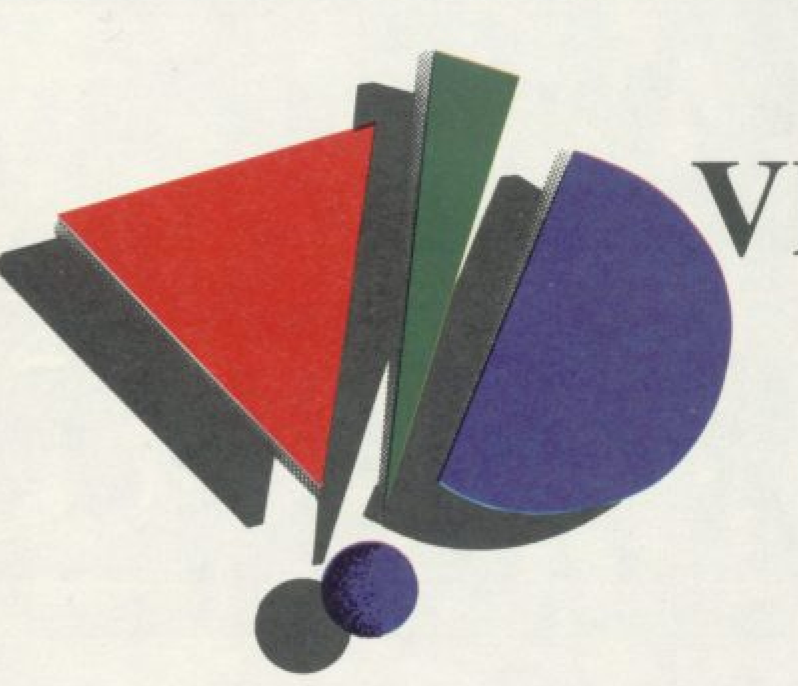
After a short trip underwater, you reach dry land which you find has suffered under the onslaught of a nuclear war. Despite the barren landscape, mutant creatures exist, setting traps and preventing your progress. Mind where you go, this game is full of red herrings. After progressing past a giant insect, you reach the final level and enter Centro Holographix itself. Although we were shown right to the end, it wouldn't be fair to reveal what awaits your arrival. Let's just say that they're prepared and so you'd better be, too.

Hammerfist will be available in January of 1990 on the C64, Spectrum, Amstrad, Atari ST, Amiga and Konix Multi System.



Clockwise from right: Spectrum, Amiga, Amiga, Konix, C64, Amiga, Konix. Note how the Spectrum and Amiga versions of the same screen are similar in all respects bar screen resolution and colour. The Amiga version had two blocks stripped from each side to convert to the Konix





VIVID IMAGE

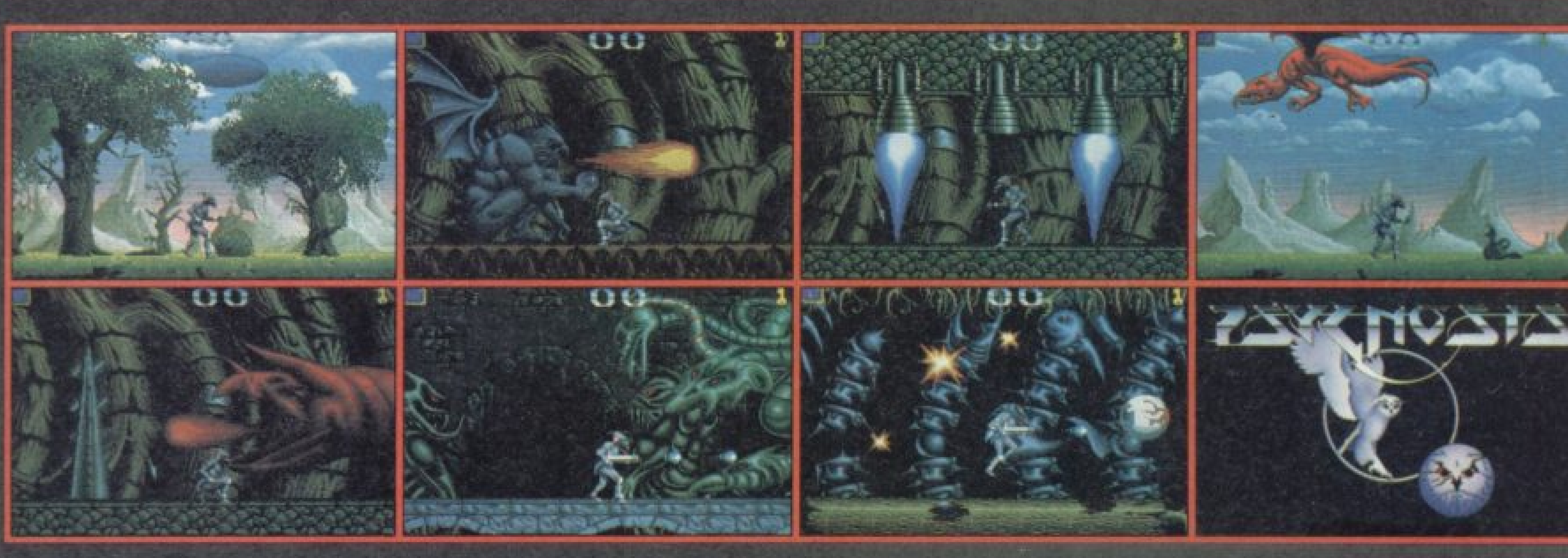
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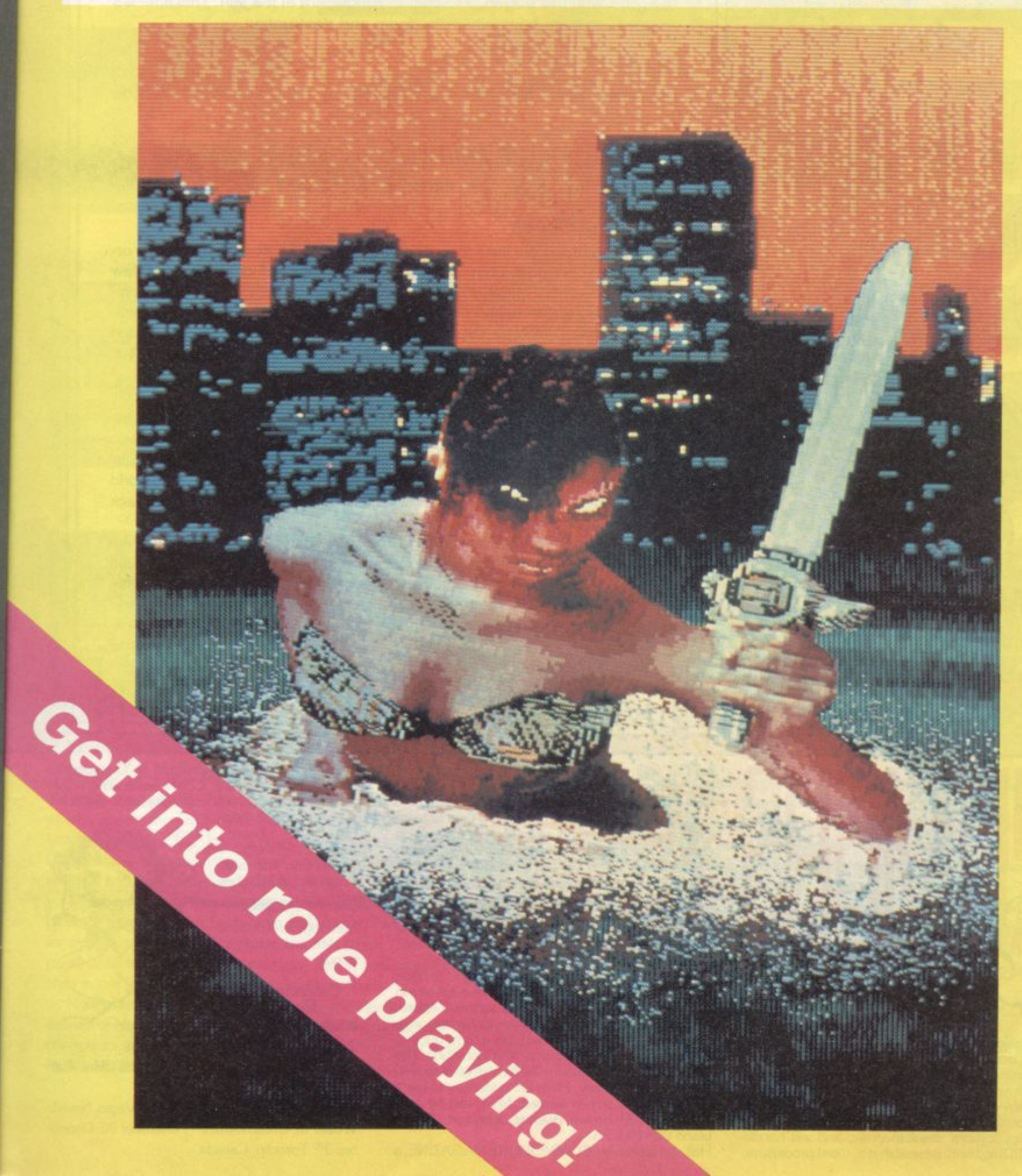
Screen Shots from the Amiga version

AMIGA £34.95/ATARI ST COMING SOON

SEPTEMBER 1988 VOL. 1

IMAGINATION Workshop

AMERICAN COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT



Get into role playing!



The Imagination Workshop

Editorial offices: 231 West 18th Street New York, New York 10011
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Produced using hands, heart and mind, an Atari Mega2 ST and an Amiga 2000. Assembled by All Union Press, Inc. using MacIntoshes and various high tech machines with names nobody can pronounce. A product of New York, New York.

IMAGINATION Workshop

NEXT ON LINE

They're lean. Mean. Green? Fresh from the sewer comes the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.

FROM BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

The guys with the slogan "We Build Worlds" are at it again. This time it's up to you to save humanity from doom and destruction.

PLUG IT IN:

One game down to Earth, the other out of sight. Plus Video arcade heaven.

INTERACTIVE GAMING:

You've got that sticker from the front, haven't you? Well, go for it!

About the Cover:

Role playing brings out the extraordinary. GIRL WARRIOR started life as an ordinary New York model. Then we digitised her, added the Hudson River and New York skyline—with AMIGA graphic enhancements completing the effect. Components used included a Minolta Maxxum 7000i (28mm lens), Ektachrome 35mm film, Panasonic CCTV black and white video camera, Digi-View Gold, and Photon Paint. Photography: Marshal M. Rosenthal. Artist: Mitchell Waxman.

MESSAGE FROM THE MARSHAL:

Did you ever stop to consider why it's great to be a Video Game enthusiast? Okay, so it causes eye strain, callouses on the hands, and maybe dents a wall or two when you toss that joystick away in frustration. But it also makes you a special person, free of the blinders that keeps so many from seeing what an exciting world it is out there. You participate, you want to DO things; you haven't time to sit back and let life pass by. You want it all.

Considering just how big that world is, it gets kind of hard to keep up. Our job here at the IMAGINATION WORKSHOP is pretty neat; we get to keep you informed on software, gaming, high-tech, and electronics coming from the American side of the "Pond." To get to it first, so that you get it first—we don't like waiting to find things out any better than you do. So stay tuned: It's gonna be fun!

Marshal



RUMORS & NEWS

Multi-tasking; everybody wants it. The Atari ST gets a step closer as Intelligent Music's ST RAM nears completion. Designed to allow multiple programs to coexist while running—it's not just a switching program—so MIDI programs can use and transfer data "on the fly." The finished version will processup to 6 applications simultaneously, and will handle non-MIDI software (spreadsheets, word processors, etc.) as well. Atari is checking it out, and we're looking to see it by November. I.M.'s address is Post Office Box 8748 Albany, New York 12208 USA.

Speaking of LYNX, it and GAME BOY seem to be sniffing at each other in an unfriendly way which could do more than just hurt sales (neither system seems tooled up as yet for a massive release). A number of companies appear nervous as to where to place their loyalties, with some having hurdled this problem by preparing to produce games for both systems, albeit quietly.

People carry the strangest things with them to trade shows, but you wouldn't expect to see a full-blown Amiga 2000 operating out of a suitcase. MicroMomentum's battery powered eye-catcher was originally designed to draw a crowd, but it turns out that there's a lot of interest in purchasing such a unit. The 9" portable plasma monitor will have to go however, it's too big and heavy. Plans are underway to use a flat color LCD screen instead. M.M. can be contacted at 100 Brown Avenue Johnston, Rhode Island 02919 USA.

Hail and farewell to COMMODORE MAGAZINE, a consumer publication sponsored by Commodore Business Machines U.S. CBM's justification is that it's time to move on in different directions—editorial not being one of them.

Term To Learn: Technodweebs—fanatic video gamers only interested in high-tech simulations featuring lots of buttons to click and switches to pull.

Calendar of Events

World of Commodore—September 22–24TH Valley Forge, Pennsylvania.

AMIEXPO—October 20–22ND Santa Clara, California.

COMDEX—November 13–17 Las Vegas, Nevada

World of Commodore—November 30–December 3RD Toronto, Canada.

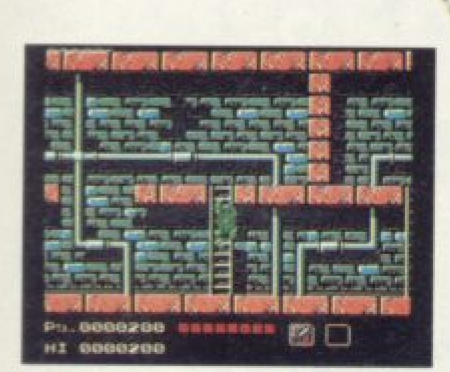
next ON line



HEROES IN A HALF SHELL











They're not your average radioactive-altered American teens. With a slice of pizza in one hand, and Nunchukas in the other—prepare for battle as here comes the TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES. For those unfamiliar with this fab four [Leonardo, Rapahel, Michaelangelo, and Donatello], try living with the idea of man-sized Turtles possessing Martial art skills and the mentalities of teenagers.

These green guys have become extremely successful since their beginnings as an underground comic, now turned into cute marketing ploys for everything from action figures to lunch boxes. So it's great to see a game based on the tougher and more deadly aspects of the "boys" lifestyle in this jammin Ultra Software Nintendo cart.

Now's the dream of a lifetime: To fight your way through the streets and sewers of New York. But unlike the typical New Yorker, you've got a good chance to survive as you take on the scummy Foot Clan through a multitude of screens. Should you endure the hideously polluted Hudson River, it's off to such exciting places as Wall Street, Greenwich Village and Oh-no, the South Bronx! The eventual goal is the Technodrome, and the utter destruction of the evil Shredder. The goal is two-fold, for there is also the need to save the beauteous April from a brain-washing perm.

Avoid Karate Bosses, Fire freaks, numerous ugly types, and the Roller car that turns Turtles into pancakes. Since each Turtle has his own attack specialty, and only one can boogie at a time—it's up to you to decide which Samurai side kick to put into action. Dangers can be found strewn amidst the landscape. Fortunately there's also the Party Wagon, bristling with weapons. Life-sustaining Pizzas, however, require more effort to find. So what're you hanging around for? Get going dude!

ULTRA SOFTWARE: 240 GERRY STREET WOOD DALE, ILLINOIS 60191

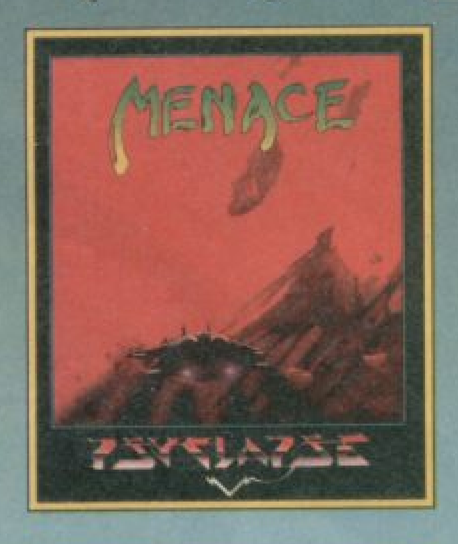
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles is a registered trademark of Mirage Studios USA.

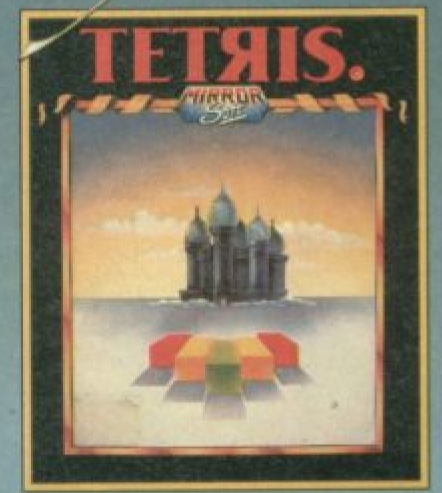
THE BEST OF THE BEST

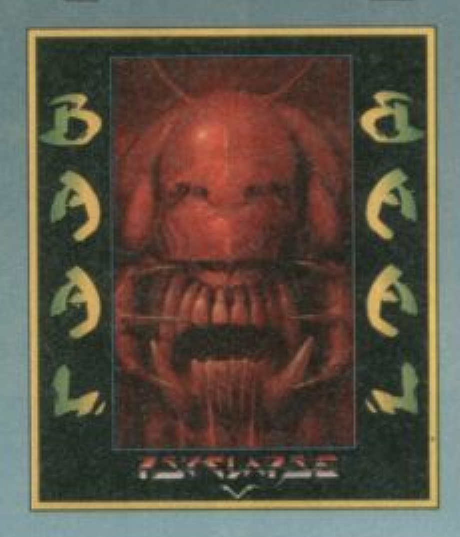


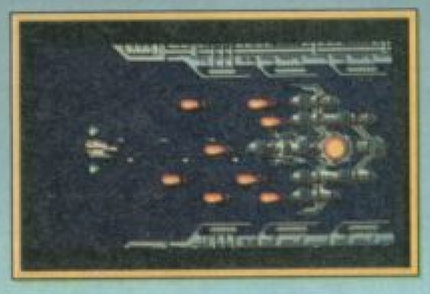


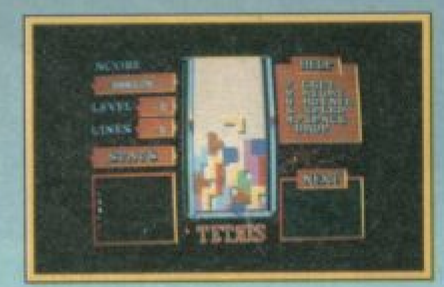
V O L U M E · 2













ST Amiga Format - Gold Disk Award
"Menace will have you hooked for hours on end. The addictive "just one more game" feeling hits you every time."

ST Action
"This game is non-stop action all the way - miss it at your peril."

Page 6
"Menace is a superb game which is impressively presented. Menace excels in terms of playability. It is a highly addictive game with enough variety for you to keep wanting to come back for more."

Sinclair User - 10
"The most original and playable game in an age."

Atari ST User - 9
"Tetris is one of those horribly addictive games that gets you saying 'Just one more game'".

Zzap - 94%
"One of the all-time computer classics . . . it's perfectly simple and simply perfect."

C + VG
"If you're after an addictive and action packed exploration game, buy Baal."

Atari ST User - Star Game
"What a brilliant game - surely Psygnosis' best to date? The graphics have to be seen to be believed and the scrolling is excellent."

ST Action
"A brilliant mixture of fine artwork, taxing strategy and all out arcade action, this game will really put you on the edge of your seat."





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DATE WITH DANGER!



Monday morning. Splash some water on the face, get a cup of coffee. Phone rings—it's the Boss with today's news: 1)The most sophisticated and lethal Stealth Fighter created has been stolen. 2)Kelly O'Neil, brilliant and beautiful aerospace engineer is missing. 3)VIPER, the most deadly crime force on Earth is preparing to destroy humanity. You're the world's only hope. You're DAVID WOLF: SECRET AGENT.

When you think of programmers—what do you see? Wild-eyed fanatics consuming gallons of coffee night after night and cackling to themselves in the dim light of a monitor tube? Cigarette butts peeking out from under reams of paper with incomprehensible notes like "Ask Sam to check register 3_+@+R*# $&^$%<G for gamma ray infestation? A mist arising from the programmer that bespeaks too many days of fast food consumption and no bathing?

None of this is present at Dynamix. Hey, these guys build worlds (computer generated 3 dimensional ones actually); examples being SKYFOX, ARCTICFOX, and CAVEMAN UGH-LYMPICS. The place is clean, too clean because it houses a film production studio—complete with lighting and scenery. Off to the side is a film processing lab as well. And all this for DAVID WOLF: SECRET AGENT.

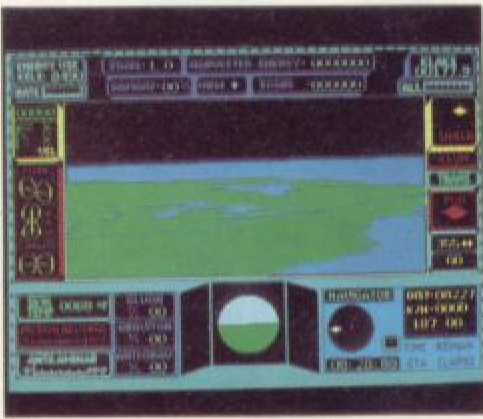
Let's get down to the action. WOLF's mission is to recover the missing Stealth Fighter, stolen by VIPER—the ugly and vicious international criminal league. He's also to rescue Kelly O'Neil, which could bring rewards of a different kind altogether [sorry folks, the game is rated PG 13]. The few clues will get Wolf on track and then he's on his own. And so are you.

In a game with major innovations. First there's game-play. Screens that you sit back and watch display what is happening, and give you the opportunity to choose the direction of events to follow. A special VCR interface lets you fast forward and bypass the arcade-type scenarios (more on this in a bit), it's designed for those who cringe at having to press buttons and rely on reflexes. The difficulty level can also be changed, increasing your chance of success.

But success won't come easy—not with the major action simulations placed into this game. Here's where your reflexes had better be sharp! Pursued by VIPER, your car is equipped with "extras" that are certainly not factory options: Oil sprays, machine guns, surface to air missiles. And you'll need them too, with the bad guys dropping dynamite on you from overhead. As associate producer Jerry Luttrell notes, "Mess up here and you be toast!"

Should you and the car stay intact—there's other scenarios to test your mettle. Leap into space on the wings of a Sky glider, equipped with a Uzzi Cannon. Controlling the direction of flight is tough enough with the wind currents constantly changing around you—but you must evade being hit by the bad guys who are shooting at you! Feel up to jumping out of an exploding plane at 15,000 feet? Only catch is you've no 'chute—just the chance to try





We got tired of cartoon images.

and catch up with a villain who's also falling and hasn't yet opened up his own parachute. So all you gotta do is grab him before the ground grabs you. Right! Everything happens around you in first-person perspective (with the exception being the Sky diving where you look down upon WOLF). The action is fast and furious. Make a mistake and you're history.

Being an interactive adventure, WOLF has multiple endings with things changing depending on what you do and when (with some not very pleasant for you or humanity). We haven't even gotten to flying that Stealth Fighter yet (that'll be fun for sure, especially when it's time for aerial combat). The game moves at a frantic pace, with urgency increasing as you learn more about VIPER's ultimate goal. A hint: They have a somewhat radical plan to achieve zero population growth.

Now the reason for the film studio. Unlike other interactive games, DAVID WOLF: SECRET AGENT uses digital reproductions of real actors—making up some 400+ digitised screens. Fifteen actors in full costume (with makeup to match) experience the action and adventure. The resulting scenes are then transferred with 32 bit scanning technology to computer. Damon Slye, VP and writer of the game, explains.

"All you ever see is artwork. We got tired of cartoon images, of only working with hand drawn graphics," he begins. "WOLF has real people, real expressions that can only come from actual life. Filming the story enabled us to get a feel for what we wanted to have happen, and the actors also got involved. This became an enviorment where the action being performed caused other events to be born, leading to a more realistic 'world'."

Slye continues. "Creating realism comes tough, but we've years of experience. WOLF took 21 programmers, artists and designers [Kevin Ryan being the chief programmer]. It's rendered with 3 SPACE, an ingenious system of ours that took five years to complete. Using proprietary 3 dimensional modeling, 3 SPACE is capable of vast coloring techniques, we can do 256 colors on screen at once. We're creating extensive and shaded landscapes—not flat, dead graphics; there's over four megabytes of digitised art work."

As an example, Slye points to a scene where WOLF's car drives around a hotel, hotly pursued by VIPER. "We mix computer generated bitmaps and animation," he says. "You see a combination of static graphics and moving images turned into true 3 dimensional shaded graphics. There's over five distinct 3D worlds here; tropical islands, enemy fortresses, missile launching tanks, charging speedboats. Add the digitised images and the realism will amaze you."

"But the most important thing to note is that the game speeds along; 3 SPACE's incredible solid-filled imaging doesn't slow things down to a crawl the way some other 3D systems do. In DAVID WOLF: SECRET AGENT we combine reality, action, and the experience of a total enviorment to participate in."

Luttrell pops his head in to add a few comments. "Don't forget the cinematic effects. Cut-ins, Fades and 'Meanwhile' screens add to the enjoyment and keep the pace of the game moving all the time. Great sound effects too - you can even add the ADLIB music synthesizer card as well [designed for the IBM]."



The guys at Dynamix figure they're pioneering a new gaming category: Action-simulation. A new category to fill the gap created by the tug of war between those relying on reflexes, and those who want to reason their way through a situation. For the arcade fans, WOLF offers shoot-em-ups and arcade action. The other side can spend their time using brains rather than brawn in resolving the game. Usually a company must sacrifice one group to satisfy the other. With DAVID WOLF: SECRET AGENT, Dynamix manages to not only make everybody happy, but to do it in a slam bang fashion.

DAVID WOLF: SECRET AGENT will be available initially for the IBM.

DYNAMIX: 99 WEST 10TH, SUITE 337 EUGENE, OREGON 97401

WIN A WET DATE WITH KELLY O'NEIL

Well, soft of. We've convinced Dynamix to show off just how great their digitising system is by putting YOU into one of the panels. Three lucky winners will be treated to a color photograph of themselves in a very enviable masculine situation. Send in a 3 x 5" card with the answers to the following. All those with correct answers will then be placed into a clean Newsfield circular filing cabinet (finally gives them an excuse to empty the trash), and three winners will be pulled out. If selected—you will be informed as to how to take the color photo of yourself for the digitising. Send your answers to IT'S MY FACE Imagination Workshop/Newsfield 47 Gravel Hill Ludlow, Shropshire England SY8 1QS.

??SECRET AGENTS QUESTIONS??

1) How many actors to date have played JAMES BOND?
2) How did Bond's car take care of two baddies in the opening sequence of THUNDERBALL?
3) How many female leads, to date, have appeared on The Avengers?
4) Still on the Avengers—who did Emma Peel's husband look like (as seen at the end of Emma's last episode)?
5) The character John Drake appeared in two different television shows. Name them.
6) Not to give the above away too much—but fill in the blanks of the following quote: I am not a number, ______________.


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PLUG IT IN



DON'T GET BOXED IN

New for the Game Boy is BOXXLE. Poor Willy needs to buy his girlfriend a gift, so it's off to dozens of warehouses to perform a little manual labor. All he has to do is move around a few boxes until they cover all the dots. The problem here is not getting stuck with a box where it shouldn't be, or being left with nowhere to move.Meanwhile, every step he takes is being counted. BOXXLE bases the score on the number of moves, rather than time -so strategic thinking becomes important.

Game-play is simple. Just move Willy with the joypad and off he goes, with any box he bumps against moving as well.The first few screens are tough enough, but it really gets hairy when you reach the upper levels. Now the warehouses become two or three times larger (the actual screen size is reduced) to accommodate lots of boxes. A password function enables you to dive right into the higher sections once you've played them and recorded the secret codes.

A special option allows you to create up to three screens of your own—letting you make large or small "Warehouses" to befuddle your friends (or yourself if you're not careful).

Part maze and part strategy, be prepared for lots of frustration—even with the one-move back up button. BOXXLE has the long-lived addiction factor to insure hours of play,not to mention gulping batteries.

BOXXLE:FCI150 East 52nd Street New York, NY 10022

NO ENCOUNTERS OF ANY KIND

When reality just isn't enough—then it's time to pull back on the anti-laminar transducer and haul grav. subLogic is known for realistic flight simulators like JET, so it comes as a surprise to see UFO. Take on the controls of a totally fictitious flying saucer. Your mission: Scour the miserable planet Earth in search of fuel to power a thirsty fleet of intergalactic crafts.

Which means avoiding the humans as you shuttle to and from the Mother Ship in low-Earth orbit, using maneuvering thrusters for docking. Piloting will require concentration in order to maintain the delicate aerodynamic balance between the planet's atmospheric drag and your anti-gravity propulsion system.

Being near-invisible to their detection devices (courtesy of a Stealth system) insures you a good chance of pulling this off—the game's over should you be found. Though not equipped with any weapons, any too-near aircraft could get the business end of your tractor beam...

Using new special effects and experimental graphic imaging techniques, UFO combines fantasy with the hard work of being part pilot and part sneak thief (Earth is nobody's idea of a picnic planet for sure). Plus the line of Scenery disks can be used here as well—creating a wholly new view on the landscape as seen from an interstellar perspective.

UFO will be available initially for the IBM.

subLogic Corporation 501 Kenyon Road Champaign, Illinois 61820

IN THE BEGINNING

Space is not only THE FINAL FRONTIERit's also where the Video arcade got started. Created by the founder of Atari, Nolan Bushnell, 1971's COMPUTER SPACE was the first electronic on screen game specifically designed for "pay and play." Enclosed in a futuristic cabinet, you commanded one of two saucer ships. A joystick controlled both speed and direction of flight, while the button on the tip fired a missile to blast your opponent to smithereens. Trouble was it was TOO good, too sophisticated for its time. COMPUTER SPACE died a quick death, but Bushnell bounced back with PONG; a simplified game of two paddles and a ball. Simple but successful, PONG ate quarters like nobody's business.

All the above (plus others like ZAZZON, MISSILE COMMAND, TRACK AND FIELD, DONKEY KONG, DRAGON'S LAIR and PAC-MAN) can be seen in HOT CIRCUITS, a traveling gallery exhibition consisting of over 40 coin-operated classics; each contributing innovations such as vector graphics and "themes" like jumping or laser-disk access. The display continues through November at New York's American Museum of the Moving Image, and then will move on to Washington, D.C. for the remainder of the year. And all this time you thought a trip to a museum would be boring?

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE: 35 Avenue at 36th Street Astoria, New York 11106



CONTEST AND CONTEST RULES

Is there a symbol on the inside of your token card? Now's the time to check. Take your time—we'll wait.

PRIZE NUMBER ONE:

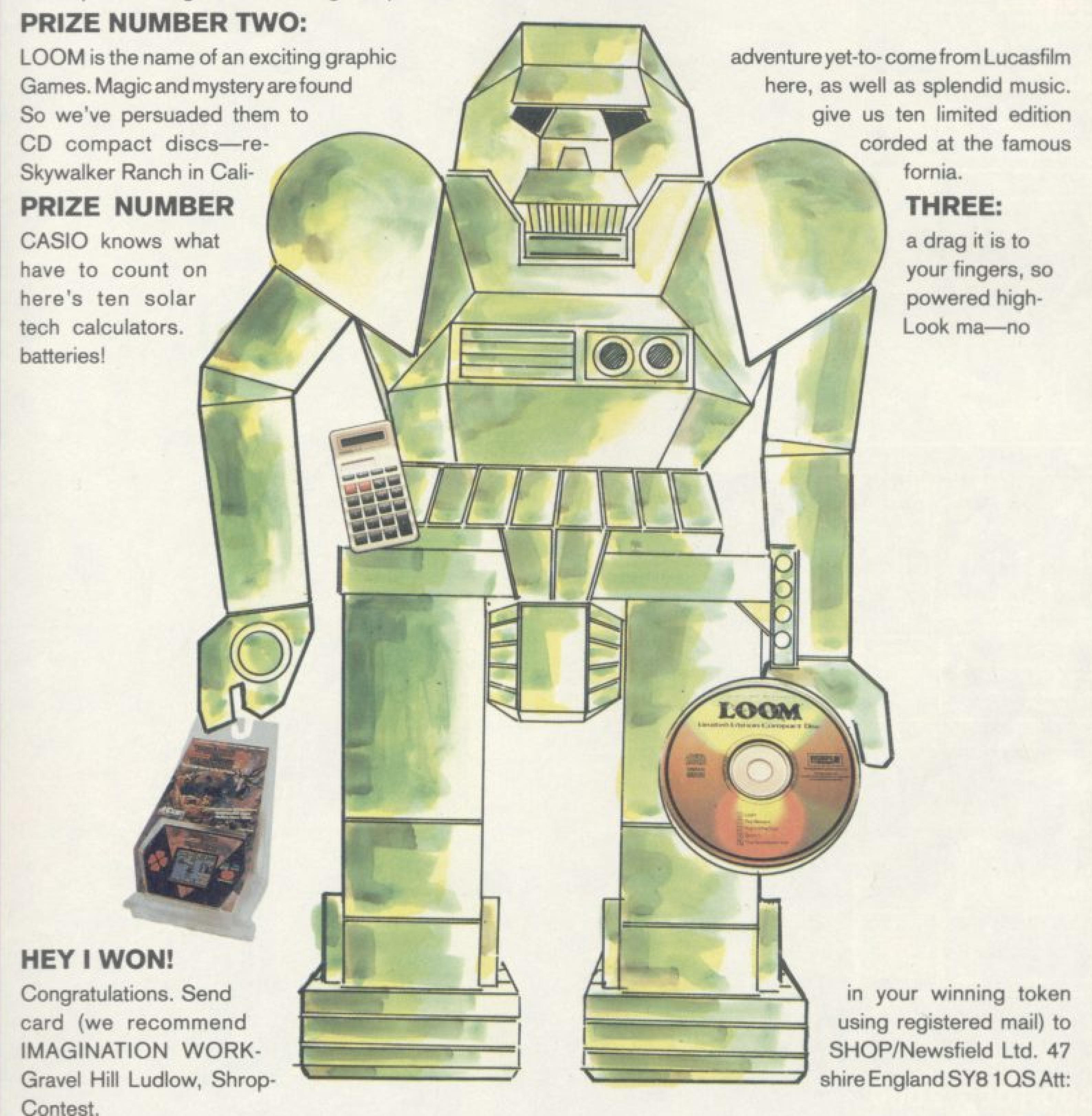
We've five advanced copies of Accolade's hot new hand-held LCD game, WIZARDS AND WARRIORS. The evil wizard Malkil has imprisoned the beautiful princess—so off you go with broadsword in hand to get her back. Seven action-packed stages, killer bees, giant spiders, and other nasties await.

PRIZE NUMBER TWO:

LOOM is the name of an exciting graphic adventure yet-to-come from Lucasfilm Games. Magic and mystery are found here, as well as splendid music. So we've persuaded them to give us ten limited edition CD compact discs—recorded at the famous Skywalker Ranch in California.

PRIZE NUMBER THREE:

CASIO knows what a drag it is to have to count on your fingers, so here's ten solar powered high-tech calculators. Look ma—no batteries!



HEY I WON!

Congratulations. Send in your winning token card (we recommend using registered mail) to IMAGINATION WORKSHOP/Newsfield Ltd. 47 Gravel Hill Ludlow, Shropshire England SY8 1QS Att: Contest.

I DON'T GET NOTHING?

It^s okay — you still have another chance to win. We'll be drawing 50 cards out of a Sorcerer's cap, the winners receiving a 12"x17" WIZARDS AND WARRIORS poster. So fill out and mail in that token card right away. And Now For The Legal Stuff: Eligability is limited to those persons who have no relationship, no matter how remote, with anyone who works for The Imagination Workshop, Newsfield Ltd, or any of the companies offering prizes. Only one prize per person may be awarded. Contest closes November 1, 1989. Unclaimed prizes may be offered as additional premiums in following issues.

Promotional considerations provided by ACCLAIM SOFTWARE, CASIO, and LUCASFILM GAMES.


ANHAK DRAKKHEN AGHNAHIR HURTHD!
Questionner
Actionner
Inspecter
Prendre
Dormir
Controle
Vous remarquez une manette
En forme de tete de Dragon
La tete bascule facilement
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D!
DRAKKHEN
You leave at night. The stars guide your steps.
Magic is going to die.
Faces and bodies are transforming.
The island spreads its evil irremediably
Soon, the old world will disappear.
You must prevent the prophecy
before it is fulfilled.
Magic, it is the life of our world
The Emperor has told you :
"If you fail, don't come back !
INFOGRAMES

the LUNATIC fringe

Mel's Law

More didactic deliberations from the man with a medical mission: Mel Croucher. This month Dr Mel looks at computers and mind-zapping

"The trouble is, if the pulses get cocked up, the result is discomfort, wobbly brain patterns and even death!"

Mel's Law: Part One dealt with computer-irradiated eyes, hair, skin and wombs. But those of us who hide behind darkened spectacles, with more hair on our buttocks than our head, with skin like a pizza, and unable to conceive babies due to a quirk of evolution; those of us who use diffusion mesh on our screens and anti-static gunge on our fingers, we are still all under attack from computers because, gentle reader, computers are eating our brains!

On September 24th, an 18-year-old student named Raymond Schoolfield stood silently outside the IBM building in Atlanta, Georgia, holding a placard reading 'COMPUTERS ARE OBSCENE'. Lunch hour shoppers called the cops, not because of the protest but because of the fact the Mr Schoolfield was stark naked. The Society for the Abolition of Computers has branches in 12 countries, and recommends that machines be destroyed by any method within or outside of the law, because it seriously believes computers are a greater threat to humanity than the hole in the ozone layer, AIDS, Bob Monkhouse or nuclear weapons. Computers have already been blown up in Italy and West Germany by groups fighting 'computer tyranny' and political hacking is now almost commonplace.

Before you dismiss this sort of technophobia as the Lunatic Fringe, let me present some more scientific facts about computer dangers: not all the old guff about databanks and Big Brother oppressing us, but a brand new Mel's Law. Are you sitting comfortably? Then I'll begin. Mel's Second Law of Computing states: **M = VDU x T2** which means that our own Madness is equal to the proportion of Time we spend computing. In other words, computers are driving us crazy, nuts, bananas, bonkers and clinically insane!

Welcome to the Pleasure Dome

Human brains and computer brains work using similar mechanisms, both based on minute electrical stimulations tickling instinct and memory. The difference between machines and humans is that computers don't experience pain and pleasure, elation and depression; but we do. Back in the Fifties, a husband and wife team named Olds and Olds proved that animal moods could be tampered with by electrical influence. Mind you, they went about it in a pretty crude fashion by shoving wires into rats' brains! The rats got hooked on stimulating their own pleasure centres, and killed themselves with joy. Since then human brains have been mapped with incredible accuracy, and we can now affect our minds using focussed magnetic fields.

Professor Raymond Jefferson, of the London Institute of Human and Animal Psychology, has been testing out the latest Japanese home entertainment gismo nicknamed the Pleasure Dome, which uses exactly this technique. His tests have found that the brain has a natural magnetic 'normal' state, which can be stimulated by tampering with nature, in much the same way as alcohol or heroin is used to give pseudo-pleasure. But if this is true, what happens when we put the theory into reverse? What effects are the electro-magnetic emissions from computers, VDUs, printers, fax machines, modems, photocopiers and all the other electronic junk that we spend hours at a time near having on our brains?

Dr Suzette Twelvetrees is 43, a full-blooded Cherokee Indian and she's in charge of the public information database in Lake Charles, Louisiana. Her computer looks like any other IBM PC, except for the fact that there's a small magic totem on top of the machine, which she believes keeps her safe from the computerised evil spirits. Don't laugh, she's probably right!

E-M Stress

Electro-magnetic fields are natural. The resonances between the Earth's molten core and the ionosphere pulse at around 10Hz, and they act as a sort of regulator for the time-clocks of all living creatures, including us. Even our own human body cells divide according to these pulses. When the first astronauts left the planet, they came back suffering from withdrawal symptoms from the Earth's natural pulses. Subsequently, these days all space-craft have artificial field generators on board producing good vibrations known as Schumann waves.

Human beings can evolve very fast to adapt to most changes, and artificial electro-magnetic pulses simply didn't exist for our first five million years of existence. But since about 1890, artificial electro-magnetic fields have been interfering with the planet's natural vibes.

From 1840 to 1920, the electro-magnetic environment increased by a factor of 1,000 times. From 1920 to 1960, the level went up by 100,000 times. Since desktop computers came on the scene, the top estimate of this new form of radiation is put at an increase of 1,000,000,000 times worldwide. In simple terms, human beings simply can't cope with this rate of change, and as a species we are cracking up.

The following data is fact. The electric ring-main in the room where your computer lives is pulsing at 50Hz, which just happens to be one of the most harmful frequencies for the human body and

brain, thus causing stress. Your computer screen is sending out exactly the same pulse, but it's directed straight towards your brain and it's only a couple of feet away. Of course, there isn't any way that we can measure an increase in the whole of mankind's stress since the advent of the micro, but for the past 15 years the Russians have been monitoring the effects of electro-magnetic fields and microwaves from computers on living cells. At the time of writing, the safety levels set for computer radiation in the USSR are greater than those in the UK by... wait for it, 1,000%!

Symptoms of computer-generated electro-magnetic stress are these, in general order of occurrence:

- Tiredness, possible depression, aches and pains in the eyes, wrists and neck.
- Difficulty in concentrating, broken sleep patterns and bad memory.
- Irrational behaviour, breaking down of the body's immune system, other physical and mental weaknesses.
- Standing naked in front of the IBM building, Atlanta, Georgia.



Anti-stress devices

I have been testing two so-called anti-stress devices for the past four months, working in front of my old electro-magnetic radiation demon Amstrad PCW for about 40 hours a week. I am only talking about a feeling of so-called 'wellbeing' here, and every morning when I switched on my computer, I made a note of how I felt in terms of alertness, tensions, hangovers, workload and a whole list of other factors. The when I finished with the computer, I'd go through the list again. I used each device over two periods of four-week cycles each. One device is well known and available in every High Street, the other isn't. It may not be very scientific, but at least I won't bullshit you. Here's my (very personal) verdict.

IONISERS are little plastic boxes that cost a few quid and plug into the mains. They cost about one pence per week to run and are meant to combat 'headaches, nausea and fatigue in computerised offices'. In theory, computers are sending out a constant stream of static, and these ionisers combat the process by 'balancing nature' and belting out negative ions. The most noticable effect was that my monitor didn't get so filthed up by dust and fag ash, mainly due to the fact that the ioniser got crusted with grey furry pollutants which it seemed to suck out of the atmosphere. But my eyes still hurt, and my brain seemed no sharper than usual, and no matter what the manufacturers say, there is no medical evidence at all to prove ionisers do any good whatsoever.

On the contrary, they are definitely NOT recommended for anyone with a dodgy heart and a pacemaker! They can certainly reduce static around computer monitors, but this has no effect on computer stress. So any claims that ionisers combat mental strain are hokum. As for harmful specks of static-charged dust in the air, they work just fine.

VERDICT Warp factor one: no change.

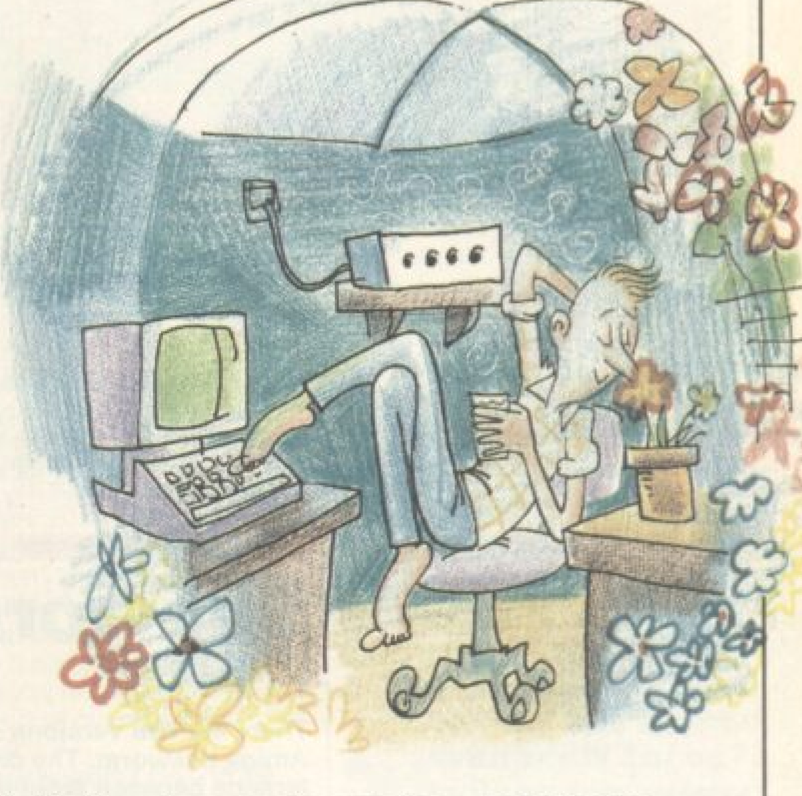
PERSONAL ANTI-STRESSORS (PAS) are little plastic boxes that cost a few quid, don't use batteries or mains, and so don't cost anything to run except pressing a button for five seconds a week to gee up the system. Oh yes, and they can last indefinitely. I tried one dinky little PAS that I carried around in my pocket, causing funny looks from my favourite wife, and another shelf-top model which I hung from the ceiling, causing funny looks from my favourite dog.

The idea of the machines is to straighten out my 'bioelectrical polarity and amplify my personal electro-field'. Now I admit to not fully understanding all the theories behind it — I own no shares in the company that makes it, in fact I'm a cynical, sceptical pricker of hype bubbles — but I must concede that the damn things seemed to work. I found that I could work longer with better concentration, and next morning I didn't have to deal with so many tyxpning errers and inane waaaahngk-hngk ramblings.

VERDICT My warp factor improved by a measurable factor.

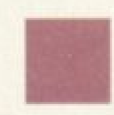
Only a generation ago, nobody thought twice about killing themselves with cigarettes in lungs, pesticides in food or lead additives in petrol. A generation from now it is highly likely that we'll look back on computer generated hazards and wonder how we could ever have been crazy enough to accept them. As for me, I've given my Amstrad to my favourite wife and am writing this on my Toshiba laptop. My favourite dog wins the ioniser, which is happily attracting doggy detritus. I'm also hanging onto my test Anti-Stressors, and hope that nobody asks for them back.

With many thanks to Robin Clarke for theoretical data on EM pollution, and the hardware for testing.



Illustrations by Robin Evans

"But my eyes still hurt, and my brain seemed no sharper than usual"



BODY BASHING

The **Personal Anti-Stressor** is available from: **Lifeperfect Ltd,** ***93 Cheap Street, Sherborne DT9 3LS***.
For the **Mountain Breeze Computer Ioniser**: Tel: (0695) 21155.

Recommended reading for more information about mind-zapping

The Body Electric by Robert Becker & Gary Selden (Quill, New York) 1988, £7.

Terminal Shock by Bob DeMatteo (NC Press Ltd) 1986, £7.50.

Subtle Energy by John Davidson (C.W. Daniel) 1988, £7.

The Geomagnetic Field And Life by AP Dubrov (Plenum Press) 1972, £65!

Robin Candy's PLAYING TIPS



Can Ludlow be having a summer? Is it really this hot? Why do I have to work through the only one we've had in years? Why doesn't anywhere sell Lemon Tango? What have wasps got against me? And who was it who nicked my money at a Simple Minds concert? But life's not all bad. Woolworth are selling Wotsits. Trevor Horn is still producing records. And there's a fresh batch of tips to be sorted through

Gravity Force

(Amiga)

Stefan Myers, Basingstoke. To start at any level just type WARP** (where ** is the level number) when asked for a password.

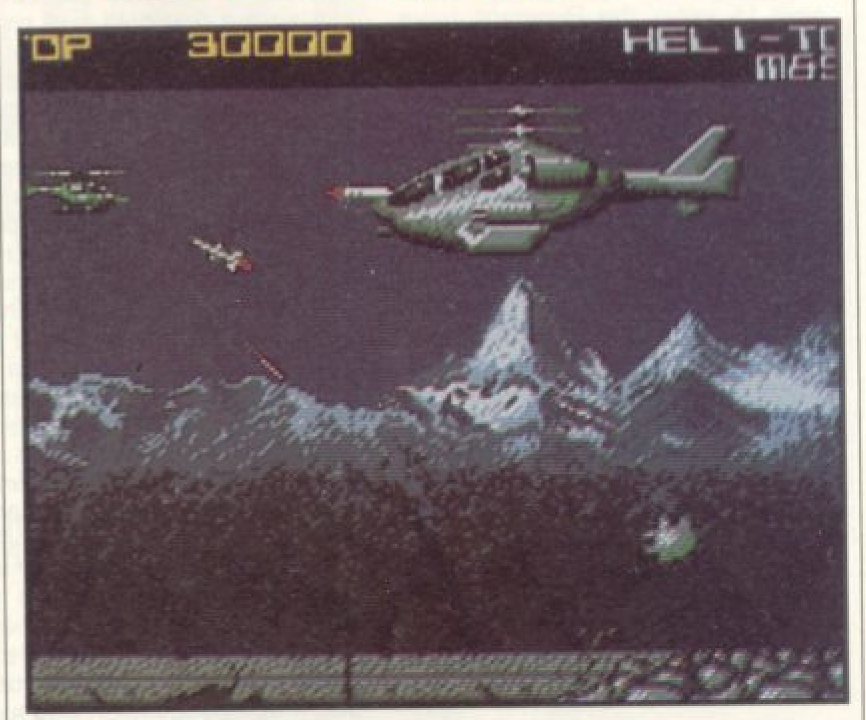
Silkworm

(Amiga/ST)

There are two versions of the Amiga Silkworm. The only difference between them is that they have different cheat modes.

Version 1: When starting the game hold down the HELP key and press the fire button. You now have infinite lives and can move through the levels by pressing keys 1 to 0 and the minus key.
Version 2: If you try the above cheat on the latest version the following message is displayed: 'Congratulations you have found the cheat mode......unfortunately it has been ZZAPPED!' If this happens go to the control selection page and type 'scrap 28' and then start the game. You now have infinite lives and can skip through levels as above.

ST version: Press C when the high score table appears and you get to meet Fat Mouse. Start the game and type 'Gorgonzola'. You get the 'Cheese mode activated' message. Just start playing the game again and you can increase the number of credits you have by pressing C.



Super Mario Bros 2

(Nintendo)

Get closer to finishing your quest with the second instalment of the Super Mario Bros 2 solution. Watch out for the final chapter in next month's TGM.

World 3-1
Go through the door. Drop off the platform and through the waterfall. As the waterfall widens position yourself in the middle. Once you've landed go through the door. Collect the tenth blade of grass for a potion. Now enter subspace and collect the coins. Go through the door and climb up till you meet Pidgit. Get the magic carpet from Pidgit (see last month's tips, World 1-2). Head upwards. Transfer from the carpet to the beanstalk by keeping your finger on Up. At the top, kill Panser (the flower) with a mushroom block. Jump across to the clumps of grass and pick the left blade. Enter subspace and collect the mushroom. Continue right and go through the door. Kill Ostro.

World 3-2
Head right. When you get to the POWs, pick up one and drop down. Continue right and throw the POW at Snifit. Go down the ladder.

Collect the bomb furthest to the left and blow up the left wall. Get the next bomb on the left and rush right, off the end of the platform and throw it at the lower left wall. Repeat this till you've cleared a way left. Go up the ladder on the left. Continue along the ladders till you find a cavern with three grass bombs. Drop the bombs over the edge as they are about to go off; with luck you should blow the wall on the left. If you fail go up the ladder then back down and repeat the process till the wall's destroyed.

Go left (don't climb right up the ladder) and use the far left grass bomb to blow a hole in the floor of the right compartment. Use the right grass-potion to enter subspace and collect the mushroom. Return right, climb the ladder and go through the door. Kill Ostro.

World 3-3
Collect the far right blade of grass for a potion. Enter subspace. Collect the mushroom and coins. Beware of Bomb-Ombs which explode unexpectedly. Go through the door. The grass blade second from the left hides a potion. Collect this and enter subspace. Get the coins. Go through the door, then come straight back out again. Climb the ladder. If you're having difficulties getting past the baddies collect the POW. Go right and through the door. Jump straight up the centre from platform to platform. Enter the room at the top and get the key. Return to the bottom and go through the door. Drop down and proceed cautiously to the locked door. Go through it.

Climb to the top; several power jumps are necessary. Go through the door. Climb up again (watch out for the enemies) till you get to a rope. Watch out for fire from the Pansers and climb to the top of the rope. After every burst of fire (there are two from each plant) transfer to the next rope on the right and keep climbing. Jump over Snifit and go through the door.

Once again start climbing up, watching out for the Sparks. Once onthe second of the three blocks power jump left into the shape thing and pull the grass. Throw the POW. Then continue upwards and through the door. Pick the grass and throw the shell along the upper platform. Follow it till it falls off the platform. Continue right, get the crystal and go through the mask. To kill Mouser 2 you have to hit him five times.

World 4-1
Use Princess; this reduces the time that has to be spent on the ice which, is a big plus. The first grass you find hides a potion. Use this when near the grass on the right. Enter subspace and collect the coins. When you arrive at the cliff you find another two blades of grass. The left-hand blade hides a potion. Enter subspace and collect the mushroom and the coins. Then drop down below the three blocks of



Robocop

(Amiga)

Matthew and Peter Warner, Basildon
Start the game then pause it by pressing return. Now type in 'BEST KEPT SECRET' including the spaces. The game then restarts and Robocop has infinite power.

Moto Roader

(PC Engine)

Todd Lillo, Ohio
To access four new course just hold down the following combinations of keys when on the title screen.

1) **Brazil** — hold down the UP key and button 1 then press start.
2) **USA** — hold down the UP key and button 2 then press start.
3) **Suburb** — hold down the select key and press start.
4) **Trap course** — hold down buttons 1 and 2 then press start.

Vigilante

(Amiga)

D Price, Fender Way.
To access the cheat mode, first get onto the highscore table and type 'GREEN CRYSTAL'. Now restart the game. Press F1 for extra lives and F8 to skip levels.

My Hero

(Sega)

Anthony McWilliams, Leeds
When you are pitted against Mohikan only use the punch or the high kick. Once you have defeated him you are rewarded with two extra lives.

Voyager

(ST)

Haydon Wright, Lincoln
On the options screen type 'WHEN THE SWEET SHOWERS OF APRIL FALL' including the spaces. A cheat mode option appears.

Nighthunter

(ST)

If you're having difficulties opening doors in Nighthunter just follow these tips from **David Hobson of Birmingham**. For each level we've shown which keys to use and where to use them.

Key Codes
LG — large gold key, S — silver key, B — blue key, SG — small gold key, R — red key

Key Locations — Level 1
LG — 3rd screen at the top of the stairs: B — top of the stairs on the left (beware of the trap): S — room after the small red doors (this is a safe room to build up energy): R — the red house before the bridge: SG — allows you to leave the first screen. Exit over the water.

Level 2
R — first screen: LG — to the right of the barn: S — the barn: SG — the house under the bridge (be careful, there's a trap on the bridge): B — the flat roof house left of the water. Exit left of the crypt and over the water or to the right of the flat roof house.

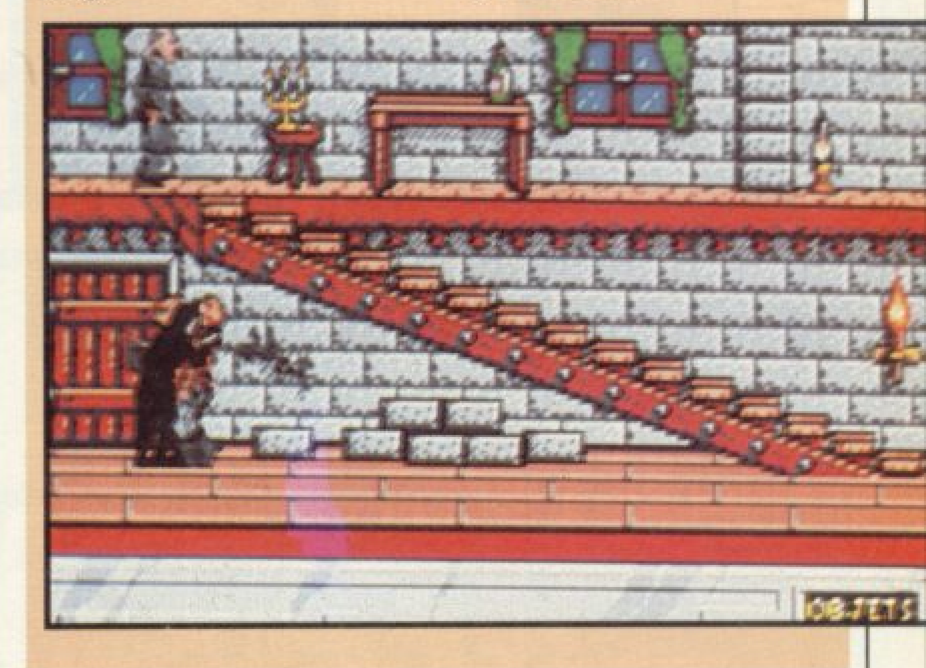
Level 3
SG — the flat roof house with the red door: R — right by the pool: LG — inside the flat roof house up the stairs (you can also exit here): B — the large red house: S — at the top of the bridge

Level 4
SG — left of exit: R — the red square house with the red door: B — the white building with the yellow bell: S — the pebble house with the bell on the right: LG — up the steps (the crypt is also). Exit left past the beach bridge.

Level 5
SG — the yellow oval door: S — left of the pool: B — the church door: R — there are a pair of doors opposite each other; go through either door then exit the other end: LG — face the alley then go right, then through the door at the top of the stairs. To exit take the large gold key, face the medallion and press fire.

Level 6
B — the door with the shield: R — the door with the circle and star: S — the door in the hillside: SG — the door at the bottom of the stairs under the window: LG — same as the previous level. To find the crypt go left passed the room with the circle and star on the door. The exit is in the same room as the large gold key.

Level 7
R — first screen: LG — to the right of the river: SG — far left: S — square castle (once inside go straight up th stairs on the right): B — inside castle, middle door: The exit is on the right. The crypt can be found to the right of the castle.



ice and pick the grass. Watch and enjoy the next bit. Go right, avoid the bad dream machines, collect the crystal and go through the mask.

World 4-2
Definitely use Princess. Keep running and go through the door. Now is the time to use Princess. The Whales shoot water jets at you. These are only fatal if you're hit by the side of one. If you land on the top of a water jet you can use it to gain extra lift. The last of the seven grass blades hides a potion. Collect this and enter subspace; collect the coins.

Go right. Collect Shyguy from the top of a bad dream machine. Throw him to your right, collect the blade of grass for a potion then climb Shyguy's back. He now carries you across the spikes. Once they're cleared jump off his back and throw the potion. Enter subspace and collect the mushroom. Kill Ostro.

World 4-3
Go through the door. Take the left-hand blade of grass. Enter subspace and collect the coins. Go out through the door then back in again. Collect the potion hidden beneath the blade of grass then walk left till you come to a wall. Enter subspace and collect the mushroom. Go back to Ostro. Stand on his right. When he fires a mint imperial at you jump on and right across the sea.

Go right till you come to a door. If don't have Princess you must go through the door. Climb up till you come to another door, go through it, go right and go through the next door. Go down and then go through the next door.

If you do have Princess you can take a short cut just by jumping over the gap.

Now go right and through the next door. Go through the mask to meet Fryguy. By staying at the top of the screen you should be relatively safe. Pick up a mushroom block and go to the right. Drop the block when Fryguy is beneath you. Repeat this till he's dead. When Fryguy is killed he breaks up into four pieces. These pieces are deadly and home in on you. Squash them with msuhroom blocks so you can progress onto the next world.

£50 WORTH OF SOFTWARE MUST BE WON!

Each month the best set of tips, POKEs or maps earns the sender an incredible £50 worth of software of their own choice along with a TGM T-shirt. Send all your gameing information to **Robin Candy's Playing Tips, TGM, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB.**

Battletech

(Amiga)

This month's £50 software prize goes to **Adam Morley from Leicester** for these comprhensive tips on the excellent Battletech.

The Citadel

1. At the start of the game invest all your money in one of the three available companies: DefHes, NasDic or BakPharm. Keep a close eye on BakPharm because its value fluctuates rapdily. The accounts update every time you receive an extra 15 C-Bills.
2. When you have enough spare cash buy an SMG from the gunshop. Then go to the citadel and enroll in weapons classes. Continue attending till you're proficient at using rifles and SMGs.
3. Now you need to buy some armour. Go to the armoury (it's below the training centre) and buy a flak suit.

Training Missions

Don't attempt these too quickly, give your investments time to grow.

Mission 1. Use a locust for this mission.

Mission 2. Use a chameleon.

Mission 3. Use a chameleon and let the computer take control

Mission 4. Same again.

Mission 5. Real combat! Use a chamelon and control it yourself. Stay in the forests and head for a lake — standing in these keeps your mech cool. Only use large and medium lasers while the enemy mech is out of range. When it's close enough use smaller weapons and let him have it! Once this mission is completed go to the lounge and talk with Rick Atlas — he gives you something useful.

Mission 6. As 5 but try to split your firepower between the two enemy mechs. Try to keep them from both getting you in range at the same time.

7. Before you attempt this mission make sure you have your SMG, flak suit and about 100 C-Bills. You should meet four Kuritan Jenner class mechs. You don't stand a chance against these. Once your mech has been destroyed get out of the citadel and head for the Starport.

The Starport

While on your way try to avoid skirmishes at all costs. If you are confronted target your weapon on the enemy who poses the most threat then try to flee.

Once you reach the Starport enter it through the mech park and head for the clothes shop (it's near the lake). Buy some new clothes to conceal your identity and then go to the Comstar and check your accounts.

Make your way to the Inagural Hall. Enter, read the text then leave. Explore the city for a while, try to avoid combat, then return to the hall. A party should have started. Here you meet a man called Rex. Outside he gives you several items. Then you are attacked. Flee! Head for the Comstar. If you have 150 C-Bills spare take them and head for the mech park. If you're short of money just hang around outside the Comstar till your account has built up. Pay the attendant. You now own a fairly decent mech. Let Rex pilot it.

The Crescent Hawks

Head back to the shattered citadel, avoiding other mechs where possible, and enter through a hole in the north. Find the barracks and go inside. Once inside you can play the holodisk Rex gave you.

Leave the citadel and head for the city NE of the Starport. Find the prison and free the captured Cresent Hawk. Then look for his mech in the pond at the back of the prison. You now have two mechs.

Visit the hospital and search the medical records. Keep trying. After a while a doctor joins you (he's another Cresent Hawk). Then visit the Mechit-Lube and 'Ask to apprentice'. If you're lucky a technician joins you. You may not find both Hawks in the same city, so visit those closest to the Starport and keep going in and out of the hospitals and Mechit-Lubes.

Once your group is assembled, and you have enough money, allow your technician to take an apprentice course at a Mechit-Lube and your doctor to attend a medical seminar. This is important as both of these need to be experts in their respective professions. When you have a group of five check all your characters. One may be a double agent. If you are uneasy about someone, go out and have a brief battle. He will be killed if he isn't in a mech. Then go and find his replacement. Give your characters flak suits and good weapons as soon as you can afford to.

Combat

At the start of the game only take on humans and single mech and human units. If you have enough money you can improve your mechs' firepower and armour by visiting the speedshops in a Mechit-Lube. You can then take on more than one enemy mech with ease. Never be afraid to flee.

Never let the computer control your mechs when fighting other mechs, its tactics leave a lot to be desired, but it is very good against human groups.

The Inventor's Hut

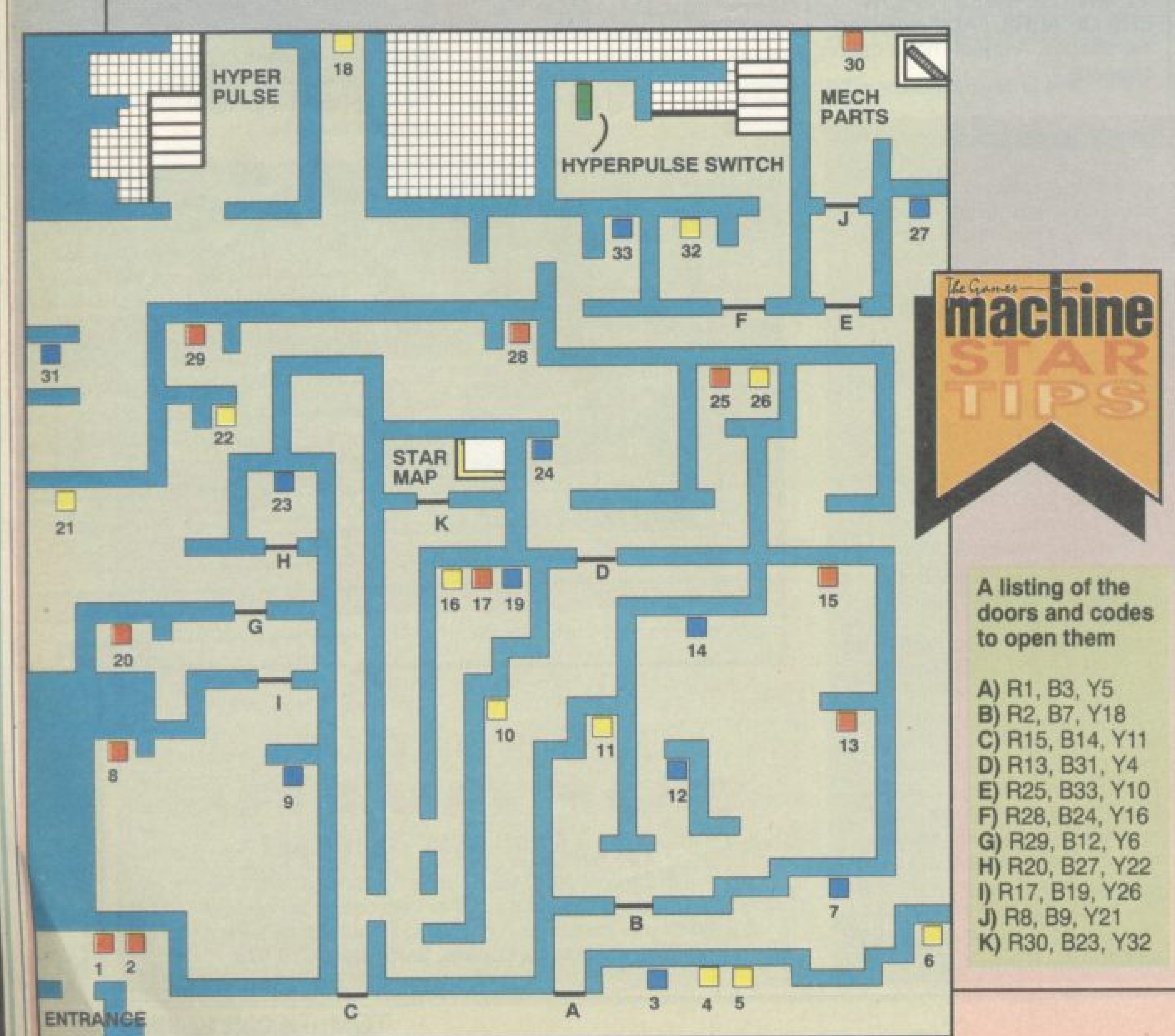
This is located in the NW a long way from the Starport. Go to the game settings menu and change the movement rate to 4 spaces per key stroke. Then, avoiding battles, get to the hut as fast as possible.

Once you've found the hut go inside and read the text which appears. If your doctor and technician are both excellent the inventor appears and repairs the holodisk. He also tells you that the Starleague Cache can be reached through a cave which lies to the SE — actually it's quite a way SE on a small island. However, the cave only appears after you have successfully answered the Inventor's questions.

The Starleague Cache

The map of the Starleague centre shows all the code terminals, doors and important features necessary to complete the game. The codes for all the doors are found in a list from A to K at the top of the map.

In order to finish the game you must open all the doors, find the mech parts store and then go down to the Star map. Here you must highlight the following planet: Pesht, Benjamin, Skye, Ryerson, Kathil and Achenar. Then go to the terminal near the entrance ladder and you're given the white code. Go and switch on the Hyperpulse generator and then go to the Hyperpulse itself. If all has gone well you see a short ending sequence.



SUPER LEAGUE SOCCER

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CENTRE BYTES

the ART of NOISES

How many times have you watched Top Of The Pops or listened to the radio and thought 'I'd like to do that'? But if you can't play an instrument you've got no chance, right? Wrong! Using computers, even the most musically inept can produce something pleasing to the ear. Thanks to MIDI (Music Instrument Digital Interface) computers can be linked to a whole host of music instruments. Over the coming months, TGM will be exploring all aspects of making music on your micro. Right from choosing your equipment to hints from the professionals. In this first installment TGM provides the essential beginners' guide to MIDI and MIDI instruments.

TGM023

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PUBLIC DOMAIN SOFTWARE..........52
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INFODESK..........39
INDEPENDENT REPAIRS..........42
16-BIT HARDWARE GUIDE..........44
TOOLBOX..........48

COMMUNICATIONS..........51
READERPAGE..........56
MEL'S TRIVIA QUIZ..........58
COMPETITION RESULTS..........58

MIDI first made its public

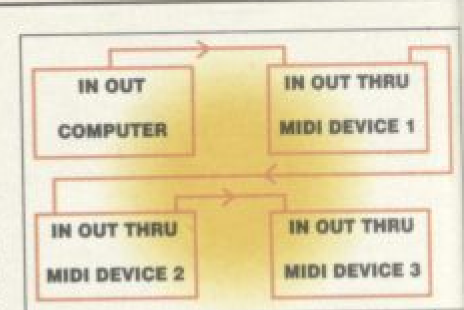
appearance at the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) Show in January 1983. Originally conceived as a means of connecting several synthesizers together so that playing the keyboard of one synth would also produce notes on the others (keyboardists had complained that they couldn't get the 'fat' sounds they wanted just by playing one synth) MIDI has since grown into an international communications standard. Computer users were quick to see the potential of MIDI — instruments could be controlled from a computer allowing the user to do things not possible with their own hands.

So what do you need to start your own music system? Obviously your computer is going to be at the heart of the system. This will be connected to the music instruments via MIDI. While MIDI interfaces are available for most home computers the lack of quality music software available for the 8-bits severely limits their use. You really need to be using an ST, Amiga or PC. The ST has long led the field of music software due to its built-in MIDI ports, but the Amiga is rapidly catching up and the PC features a range of MIDI instruments designed specifically for it.

Once the computor's sorted out you're going to need some MIDI music equipment. There are instruments available to suit most price ranges. The Ideal set up is a computer, some sort of keyboard/synthesizer and a multi-timbral sound module. However, there are some keyboards which also include multi-timbral capabilities thus dispensing with the need for a sound module. Check the TGM guide to MIDI instruments for a full explanation of terms. But before you get your music equipment singing in perfect harmony you need a sound knowledge of MIDI.

MIDI PORTS

There are three types of MIDI port: In, Out and Thru (usually situated at the back of the instrument). The MIDI In receives information from other MIDI devices via MIDI leads and passes this information onto the device's microprocessor. The MIDI Out port does the opposite — it sends data from the device's microprocessor down an attached MIDI lead to another device. Information can only travel in one direction down any MIDI lead. Finally the Thru port sends an exact copy of all the messages received by the MIDI In port down a MIDI lead. The advantage of Thru ports becomes obvious when you want to connect several devices together.



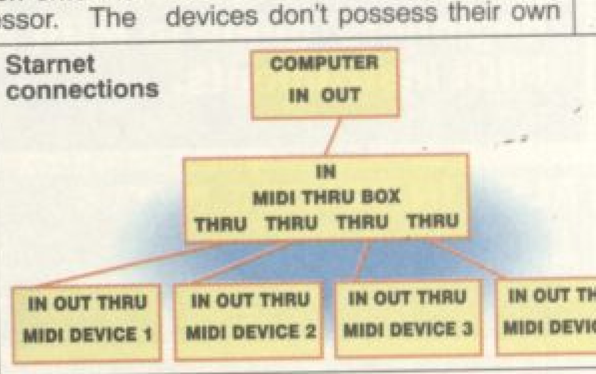
MIDI connections

MIDI CONNECTIONS

Once you understand the function of each MIDI port, connecting several devices together is easy. If you're connecting a computer to just one MIDI device, simply connect the MIDI In of the computer to the MIDI Out of the device and connect the computer's MIDI Out to the device's MIDI In. This allows the computer and the MIDI device to send and receive information from each other. When connecting devices together it's worth remembering that MIDI In ports can only be connected to MIDI Out ports of another device and vice versa.

The chances are you're going to want to connect several devices together and control them from one source (ie, a computer). This is where the Thru port comes into its own. The daisy chain network passes copies of MIDI messages from the computer to all the devices in the network. You can expand the daisy network to any size but some devices create a brief time lag before sending information through the Thru port which can mess up synchronization between devices.

A much better way of linking devices together is the Star Network. In order to link devices in this manner you need a MIDI Thru box, which usually features a MIDI In port and several MIDI Thru ports. Link the computer MIDI Out port of your computer to the MIDI In of the Thru box then link the MIDI Thrus of the Thru box to the MIDI Ins of your other MIDI devices. This networking style eliminates time lag and is useful if your MIDI devices don't possess their own



Starnet connections

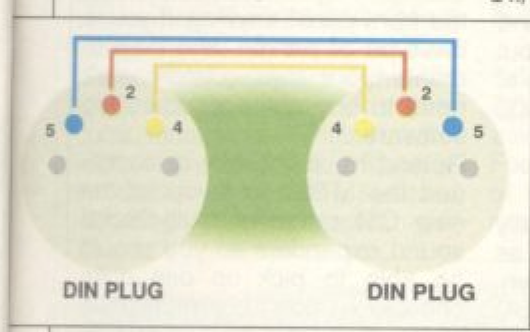
Thru ports. Both of these networks allow the computer to talk to any or all of your MIDI devices at the same time.

MIDI CHANNELS

The networks transmit information from the computer to all the devices in the system. There are often times when you want only one device to respond to a particular bit of information and the other devices to ignore it. MIDI uses MIDI channels to communicate with specific devices in the system. There are 16 MIDI channels. Each piece of MIDI information has a channel number included in it. When a MIDI device receives information through its In port it first checks to see if it can receive messages on that channel. If it can, then it responds to that information if not it is ignored.

So a computer can tell one MIDI device to play a totally different tune from another device in the same setup. Multi-timbral sound modules can be programmed to respond to information on several channels simultaneously.

MIDI LEADS



A MIDI lead is a shielded, twisted-pair cable with a 5-pin DIN plug at either end. The shielding protects the cable from radio frequency interference which can muck up your data. You can buy MIDI cables from most music stores but it's often cheaper to make your own. Buy a couple of 5-pin DIN plugs and a piece of twisted-pair cable. Then solder it all together just like the diagram. It's important to keep your leads as short as possible to reduce the risk of radio frequency interference. Certainly leads should never be longer than 50 feet.

IMPLEMENTATION

Before buying any piece of MIDI equipment it's important to understand just what it's capable of understanding via MIDI. The computer or synth may be sending out pitch bend messages but if your sound module isn't capable of receiving pitch bend data via MIDI then no end of fiddling will produce pitch bends.

One way to check compatibility problems between MIDI devices is to compare their MIDI implementation charts (see example). The MIDI Manufacturers Association asks all its members to include a MIDI implementation chart with each MIDI device detailing what MIDI messages each device is capable of transmitting and receiving, along with manufacturers remarks about each feature. An 'O' shows that a feature is recognised or transmitted while an 'X' shows that the feature has not be implemented. Compare the transmitted and received columns of each MIDI device along with the features of any music software you're using to see if they're fully compatible. Here's a full explanation of categories on a MIDI implementation chart.

BASIC CHANNEL shows the MIDI channels that the device is capable of sending and receiving data on. Default is the channel(s) in use when the unit is first switched on, while Changed is the channel(s) to which the unit can be set.

MODE: the MIDI channel modes the device can use. There are four: Mode 1 Omni On/Poly, Mode 2 Omni On/Mono, Mode 3 Omni Off/Poly and Mode 4 Omni Off/Mono. The mode setting tells the MIDI device how to listen to MIDI information and what to do with it. When Omni is turned on the device listens to all MIDI channels and responds to all channel messages. When turned off the device responds only to messages sent on specific channels it's set to receive. Poly allows the device to play several notes at once and continue playing until it receives a MIDI message to stop, or the number of concurrent notes exceeds the device's polyphony. When set to Mono, only one note is played at a time. Default indicates the mode setting when the device is first turned on. Messages indicates the modes that the device can be set to receive, and Altered refers to the modes the device can't recognise along with the mode that the device switches to when a request for an unrecognised mode is received.

NOTE NUMBER: the pitch range of the device expressed in numbers — each note on a keyboard is given a number. Note number shows the pitch range the device is capable of transmitting and receiving. True Voice shows the range of pitches that the device's voices are capable of playing.

VELOCITY shows whether the device is capable of transmitting and receiving velocity data. The harder you hit the keys on the keyboard the louder the sound gets — very useful for adding expression to music. Some synths don't feature velocity-sensitive keyboards but can recognise velocity information via MIDI.

Function ...		Transmitted	Recognized	Remarks
Basic Channel	Default	1 - 16	1 - 16	memorized
	Changed	1 - 16	1 - 16	
Mode	Default	3	1, 2, 3, 4	memorized
	Messages	x	POLY, MONO(M=1)	
	Altered	IIIIIIIIIIIIII	x	
Note Number		36 - 96	0 - 127	
	True voice	IIIIIIIIIIIIII	0 - 127	
Velocity	Note ON	x 9nH,v=64	o v=1-127	
	Note OFF	x 8nH,v=64	x	
After Touch	Key's	x	x	
	Ch's	x	x	
Pitch Bender		o	o 0-12 semi	7 bit resolution
Control Change	1	o I1	o I1	Modulation wheel
	2	o I1	o I1	Breath control
	5	x	o I1	Portamento time
	6	o I1	x	Data entry knob
	7	o I1	o I1	Foot volume
	64	o	o	Sustain foot sw
	65	o I1	o I1	Portamento f sw
	96	o I1	x	Data entry +1
	97	o I1	x	Data entry -1
Prog Change		o 0 - 31	o 0 - 127	
	True #	IIIIIIIIIIIIII	0 - 31	
System Exclusive		o I2	o I2	Voice parameters
System Common	Song Pos	x	x	
	Song Sel	x	x	
	Tune	x	x	
System Real Time	Clock	x	x	
	Commands	x	x	
Aux Messages	Local ON/OFF	x	x	
	All Notes OFF	x	o (123,126,127)	
	Active Sense	o	o	
	Reset	x	x	

Notes: All MIDI communications are enabled if MIDI switch is on.
I1 = transmit/receive if CH information switch is on.
I2 = transmit/receive if system information switch is on.

Example of a typical MIDI Impelementation Chart

AFTERTOUCH: a keyboard with aftertouch senses changes of pressure on the keys. This can be used to add vibrato or adjust volume levels. Monophonic aftertouch senses the overall pressure on the keys and adjusts the overall volume of the sound accordingly, while polyphonic aftertouch adjusts the volume levels of individual notes.

PITCH BENDER: whether the device responds to pitch bend data.

CONTROL CHANGE: control change message sends information about a new setting for a control on a MIDI device. So if your device is capable of sending sustain pedal information when the sustain peddle is pressed, the new setting is sent via MIDI to the receiving device. If the receiving device is capable of responding to that control change it alters its settings accordingly. The manufacturer will list the controls that the device is capable of transmitting and receiving along with the control change number.

PROGRAM CHANGE: when a MIDI device receives a program change message it selects the sound specified by the message received. True lists the range of numbers the device can respond to.

SYSTEM EXCLUSIVE: although MIDI is a communications standard most MIDI devices include features that are unique to them or a particular range of MIDI devices. System Exclusive messages allow similar MIDI devices to swap data on their own unique features. So if a MIDI device uses a particular method of sound synthesis it can swap sound data with other devices that also use this method via System Exclusive messages.

SYSTEM COMMON: these are messages which prepare a MIDI device to play a particular song. The messages select a song, find a common starting place and tune the instruments should they need to be retuned.

SYSTEM REAL-TIME CLOCK refers to whether the device can receive timing clock messages — it helps keep separate sequencers playing at the same tempo. Commands refers

PRESS ANY KEY

to the ability to receive Start, Stop and Continue messages.

AUX MESSAGES are miscellaneous messages. Local control messages disconnect or connect a MIDI device from its own sound generators — useful if you wish to use your synth only as a mother keyboard. Once the local control has been turned off the synthesizer won't make any sounds whenever its keys are pressed, instead all messages which would normally have an effect on the synth are transmitted via MIDI to a receiving device.

Sometimes a synthesizer doesn't receive a Notes Off message needed to turn off a note so it continues playing indefinitely. When an All Notes Off message is received any notes currently playing are turned off.

Active Sensing detects whether there is a good connection between MIDI devices. After receiving the first active sensing message the first MIDI device expects to receive active sensing messages regularly. If it doesn't it assumes there's a faulty connection and stops transmitting MIDI data. Not all devices implement active sensing but this won't cause any problems. If a device is incapable of understanding active sensing data it ignores these messages.

NOTES: any additional MIDI features which can't be explained under the other headings.

MIDI INSTRUMENTS

Almost any musical instrument can be a MIDI device. The only thing all MIDI devices have in common is a microprocessor which is needed to send and receive MIDI messages. Here a few details on the main types of MIDI devices available.

SYNTHESIZERS: a keyboard capable of creating sound. Not to be confused with Single Keyboards which do not allow you to alter or create your own sounds.

SINGLE KEYBOARDS: a self-contained unit that includes drums, autobass and some sort of auto-accompaniment. The most popular low-cost MIDI instrument.

SOUND MODULES: Sometimes you may wish to add more synthesizers to your setup for a wider range of sounds. If you already own a keyboard you don't really need another since extra keyboards are unnecessary and often expensive. A sound module is essentially a synthesizer without a keyboard.

There are sound module versions of most popular synthesizers which are normally a good deal cheaper than their keyboard equivalents. However, the sound module must be MIDIed to either a computer/sequencer or another keyboard before it produces sound.

A multi-timbral sound module is one that can play several sounds at the same time. Each of the sounds respond to information from different MIDI channels — so it's like having several synthesizers combined in one unit. Many now include percussion sections so you can perform an entire multi-track composition with just one unit. When buying any MIDI equipment check to see if it is multi-timbral and polyphonic (capable of playing several notes at a time).

MOTHER KEYBOARDS: while a sound module is the electronic guts of a synthesizer a mother keyboard is a keyboard without any sound generating circuitry. Seems a bit pointless? If you're particular about the quality of keyboard you play then one of these is a good buy. Most are velocity and aftertouch sensitive and have a better 'feel' to them than standard synthesizer keyboards.

SAMPLERS translate sound into a stream of digital data. The sampler can then retranslate this data to reform the sound. So you can record a drum sound into a sampler and then play that sound on a MIDI keyboard. Samplers also allow a limited amount of editing. Sections of the sample can be cut or duplicated to extend the sound.

High quality samplers are really out of the budget range of most computer musicians (often costing several thousands of pounds) but Sample Players provide a cheaper alternative. These units can play samples from high quality samplers but aren't capable of actually sampling themselves. Most are supported by a good range of library disks or ROM cards.

DRUM MACHINES include a wide range of percussion sounds — sometimes samples recorded from real drums or sounds synthesized by built-in sound generators. Also allows you to order these sounds into a rhythm track usually by tapping the rhythm on the drum machine's control buttons.



Choosing your first MIDI instrument is always difficult. Fortunately, TGM provides a helping hand with an unbiased look at some of the better bargains available to the first-time buyer.

SOUND MODULES

YAMAHA FB-01

An eight-voice multi-timbral sound expander producing voices similar to the cheaper DX synthesizers (DX100, DX27), some of which are a bit pathetic. However, there are plenty of voice editors and decent library sounds available so it could prove useful. Eight-note polyphony is a bit restricting but costing around £100 secondhand adding another FB-01 to your set-up shouldn't dent your wallet too much.

YAMAHA TX81Z

Along similar lines to the FB-01 but uses a more sophisticated version of Frequency Modulation synthesis to produce better sounds. Fully compatible with DX100/27/21/11 voices and voicing software. A good unit but lacking on the percussion side of things. Buy new for around £400 secondhand for £250.

ROLAND MT-32

The Roland D-50 rapidly replaced the Yamaha DX7 as THE synthesizer to own. Featuring linear arithmetic (LA) sound synthesis it is capable of producing some mindblowing sounds — you can bet that several songs currently in the Top 40 are be using a D50. Unfortunately retailing for over a £1000 it is out of the reach of most part-time musicians. The Roland MT-32 is a low-cost multi-timbral sound module that uses a cut down version of LA synthesis that is still capable of producing some phenomenal sounds.

The unit comes complete with 128 preset sounds; ranging from acoustic pianos to ethereal sounding synths, favourites include Fantasy and Warm Bell. There is also a comprehensive rhythm section containing 32 percussion sounds including toms, cymbals and congas, thus dispensing the need for a separate drum machine. Up to eight voices and one rhythm part can be used at any one time; each controlled by a separate MIDI channel.

Due to the way that the MT-32 synthesizes sounds (each sound is constructed from partials with up to four partials in any sound) polyphony can vary considerably. The MT-32 is capable of playing 32 partials shared across the nine MIDI channels. So if you use several instruments made up of four partials each the actual number of notes you can play at a time will be severely reduced.

The MT-32 an ideal unit for the computer musician — simple to use but powerful. A built-in reverb unit makes this module even more attractive. The only real disappointment is voice-editing — you can't. Not from the front panel anyway. If you're the type of person who likes to create your own sounds you'll need to buy some voice-editing software.

Roland have recently discontinued the MT-32 in favour of the new CM range of multi-timbral sound expanders so you should be able to pick up one quite cheaply — don't pay more than £300.

CHEETAH MS6

Fans of old analogue style sounds may be interested in the MS6 (£299) multi-timbral sound module. With 320 preset sounds you can be sure of finding several to your liking. We particularly liked some of the string sounds. The unit is six voice multi-timbral and six note polyphonic. It also includes some neat keyboard features. When you set up the unit in multi-timbral mode not only do you have to choose what sounds you wish to use but also the note range of each sound and the MIDI receive channel. If you set the same MIDI receive channel for each sound but different note ranges this gives you a keyboard split effect regardless of whether your keyboard features one or



Casio CT-650 465-sound tone bank keyboard


Casio's new MT-740 5-octave mini keyboard

not. If you also set the same note range for each sound you can play all six voices on one note. If you choose the voices carefully this can result in some monster sounds. The only drawback of using the MS6 like this is that you can only play one note at a time so you'll need another sound module or a multi-timbral keyboard to take advantage of this mode.

ROLAND CM 32L/32P/64
The CM range of multi-timbral sound modules were specifically designed with computer users in mind. Fully under computer control each unit features only a master volume control on the front panel.

The CM-32L (£369) is essentially an MT-32; the only major difference is the addition of 33 sound effects (thunder, waves, sirens etc). The CM-32P (£445) brings the sound quality of near professional samplers within the reach of budget-conscious computer musicians. While it can't sample sounds itself, it features 64 built-in high-quality samples including acoustic/electric guitars, electric organs, brass sections, acoustic/electric pianos, basses and choirs.

It's six-voice multi-timbral with 31-note polyphony — as it uses samples, you don't have to worry about how many partials each voice is using. It's a shame it doesn't feature any built-in percussion sounds, but compatibility with the Roland U-110 sample player ROM cards (£45 each) ensures a steady flow of new sounds for a while yet. Definitely a good buy.

If you can afford it go for the CM-64 (£789). Basically the CM-32L and the CM-32P in one unit. It's 15-voice multi-timbral and 63-note polyphonic — more than enough for most applications.

KEYBOARDS/ SYNTHESIZERS

CASIO CZ-101
A good entry level buy (pay around £100 secondhand). Featuring mini-keys it's capable of playing four monophonic notes across four MIDI channels. There's a good range of voice editors and plenty of excellent library sounds are available. If you're strapped for cash a CZ-101 and a FB-01 make an ideal low cost setup.

CASIO MT-740/CT-650
Recently released at the British Music Fair the CT-740 (£199.95) continues where the likes of the CZ-101 left off. It features a five-octave mini-size keyboard, a tone bank containing a mammoth 465 sounds as well 49 different percussion sounds. Rhythm tracks are programmed by tapping a rhythm on the relevant keyboard keys. 20 preset styles of auto-rhythm and three different types of auto accompaniment (including bass lines and chords) can be used to flesh out your melodies. Not only do you get a good range of sounds but it's ten note polyphonic and multi-timbral. One of the better low-cost single keyboards. If you don't like the thought of mini-keys go for the new CT-650; essentially a MT-740 with five octaves of full-size keys for the slightly dearer price of £249.

ROLAND D50
The one major disadvantage of the D50 is that it isn't multi-timbral, so even if you can afford one you're still going to need some more equipment to get complete sound. So Roland introduced the D20 and D10. The D20 (around £900 secondhand) is eight-voice plus one rhythm track multi-timbral with a built-in sequencer and disk drive — but since you're going to be using a computer to sequence it's better to go for something cheaper but with the same amazing sounds. The D10 (around £700 secondhand) is exactly the same in all major aspects as the D20 but lacks the disk drive and can only sequence the rhythm track.

The recently released D5 (£595) is further scaled down with no built-in sequencing facilities and no built-in reverb or digital delay. Nevertheless, the price makes it an attractive all in one unit. You get a five octave velocity-sensing keyboard, programmable arpeggio, chord play and harmony effects, a large set of percussion samples, split keyboard mode (so you can play one sound at the top of the keyboard and a totally different sound lower down the keyboard) and great D20-style sounds.



Roland's MT-32

Sarm West Studio



NEXT MONTH: TGM TAKES AN IN-DEPTH LOOK AT SEQUENCER SOFTWARE FOR THE IBM PC, ATARI ST AND AMIGA.

ADLIB PCMS

The PC is lucky in that it has MIDI instruments designed specifically for it, complete with all the necessary interfaces built into one unit. Paul Rigby takes a look at one such unit.

Frankly, the choices presented to people just beginning to enter the wonderful world of computer-related music are rather daunting. What is needed, therefore, is a (cheap) beginner's pack which has everything included within one box, but still has the capability for expansion later on. Enter, stage left, the AdLib Personal Computer Music System (PCMS) for the PC (£208.85).

The PCMS principally surrounds the half-height AdLib board which slots into the back of your PC along with a volume control and a headphone/speaker socket. The internal capabilities of the board include the option of playing 11 different instruments at once, along with FM synthesis and white noise generation. A 34-page manual is included along with a Jukebox demo (on a floppy) which provides 25 different tunes.

A second box provides a floppy disk with the Visual Composer in it. A 137-page, ring-bound manual is included. AdLib describe it as a 'music editor'. It is, in fact, a simple sequencer which allows you to compose with the 50 instruments provided within the software. There is an onscreen keyboard running down the side of the screen allowing you to experiment with note positions, which take the form of blocks and bars, without having to play the whole piece, a nice addition this. You can alter the tempo, the instrument, volume, pitch and bend. Copy, cut and paste, and transposition commands are also available.

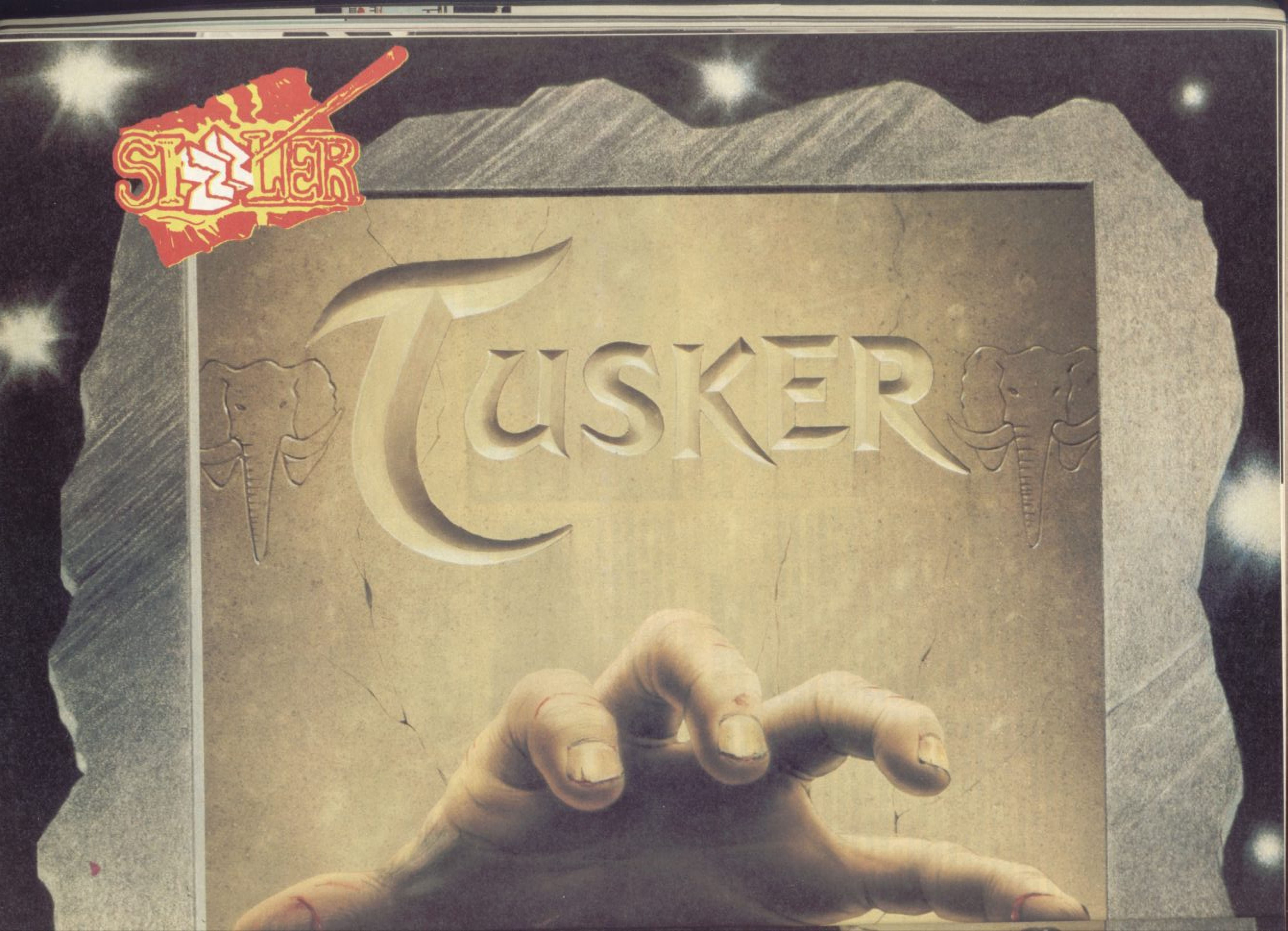
Another excellent addition is the pitch accuracy feature which includes a slight pitch deviation between two instruments playing the same music — which results in the music sounding more natural. The manual includes a step-by-step tutorial. Online help is provided, too.

The final book, running to 72 pages, contains composition projects. Using the Visual Composer and the AdLib board you will be taken slowly through your first composition, a ballad in this case. Eight further projects, each teaching different styles, such as blues and swing jazz, form the rest of the book.

The PCMS package is an excellent 'all-in-one' starter pack which can be used without any previous experience at all. Once you have wizzed through the included manuals you can purchase add-ons such as a second Composition Projects Manual, a Programmer's Manual, an Instrument Maker program (created via your PC or via MIDI) and a MIDI sequencing option for the Visual Composer which provides the expansion potential.

Contact: Adlib PCMS, Electrone Ltd, Haywood House, High Street, Pinner, Middlesex, HA5 5QA.

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Art Throbs

Zog dons a dirty old mac, locks his bedroom door and looks at one of the seamier sides of comms: pornographic bulletin boards

Summer is an odd time for writers. Too many people are away on holiday. Strange things begin to happen to equipment. Gremlins must breed in the warm weather — they expand back to old nests in keyboards and hard disks. Just when I thought it was safe to avoid doing a backup this week, of course...

Strange this also begin to happen to people. Down the telephone came an unusual message. A journalist, wanting to talk to me about 'Porn Bulletin Boards' (not from TGM you understand). I returned from a three-hour creative lunch at the local pub to find a cryptic note waiting on the table. Wondrous images began to form in the mists of my lightly befuddled brain (good Consternoon, afterble). The phrase 'Bulletin Boards' was one I thought that I fully understood. But what exactly was a 'Porn' BB?

Was it a kind of board which served as a sort of lonely hearts bureau: 'Trainee Programmer, into assemblers and sprites, seeks young companion to share core dump listings and discuss ray-tracing algorithms'?

No... not enough porn there, somehow. Sounds a bit like one of those chatlines, without the immediacy of a ten-way conversation. Maybe the suggestive nature of some computing words were being more fully used? 'BASIC programmer with fully structured hardware, likes bytes and nibbles, seeks compatible software for experimentation with advanced languages'? 'Bisexual coder seeks a good time from someone with hard OR floppy disks'? Or even 'Call me for help with PEEKing while you POKE'? 'Hacker seeks bits with fully compatible I/O connectors'!

Perhaps it was the strong cups of coffee, or possibly Queen Maggie on the telly, but the images blurred and began to fade before I got too carried away. What a sorry state I must be in...

Instead, reason leapt back into the foreground and took charge. One chain of thought collapsed to be replaced by a new idea. Words were one thing, but pictures were something else entirely. If you had some comms package like XModem or Kermit available, giving a decent error-corrected protocol, then you could send art package data files...>blush< If you sent a whole set of them and ran them through an animation package, you could see...>gasp!< >blush furiously!<

Of course, if this was an amateur board, then it would be free and anyone could phone them. Anyone that knew the number, that is. But someone has to spend time and effort digitising images and paying for the computer to store them on. Contributors would be most welcome, of course.

Alternatively, if it were a commercial board, the game would change. Because there is a cost for using the board, you are paying for all the work, equipment and, or course, profit margin. And I would never be totally comfortable with sending them information about me when paying by cheque or credit card. Maybe a plain brown envelope would do, but if they ever got raided by the vice squad, I have no wish to be visited out of the blue by one of the boys in blue, as it were. Somehow, the whole idea of a Porn BB to which you subscribe smacks of massage parlours in Soho and organised but grubby businesses. However, at least young kids (unless they are enterprising enough to borrow dad's credit card number and know that he never checks it when the bill arrives) can be restrained from running up huge bills or seeing things that parents or society deems too illicit.

A tricky philosophical point has just struck me. Is all this data really 'porn'? After all, it is just a collection of bytes in a file or two. Amongst the several grillion ways that the data can be interpreted, only one is known to produce anything meaningful, and this one way just happens to be by a program which displays all of the data file in a pictorial way. Then again, colour pictures on a TV are made up from hundreds of tiny dots of three colours. So, if you watch a video entitled Cartoons (which is really Swedish Schoolgirl Holiday Bonking Academy IV) (Err... no mum, it is really cartoons, honest, would you like a cup of tea rather than watching a boring old video?), then does porn exist on the video tape or is it just in the mind of the beholder? And, incidentally, how does the odd nude statue such as the Venus de Milo fit in? It doesn't move, true, but if it is of a naked bod then is it Porn or is it Art? Or both, like light, which can be treated as both a particle and a wave? Not to mention books, where a collection of symbols on paper can be interpreted by some of the members of this planet (not everyone can read Serbo-Croat, y'know) as High Porn, and cause them to react according to their wont — by banning it, calling for public flogging of the author or finding someone to help try out the positions, for example.

After all that, I also wonder if PBBs exist at all. I mean, what is the point of pictures (usually but not always of pouting nymphettes) which you can download from a BB? Is it fun to just look at and fantasise over Luscious Linda or Hank the Hunk, or do you want to try it as a background screen on which you can also display your program in the foreground? Does it somehow make your computer sexier? Perhaps one should consider the difference between real People, and people who exist and react as desired by little bits of one's imagination.

Sadly, when I returned the call, the journalist just wanted to know if I knew the numbers of any such Bulletin Boards, to which I could not help. Unfortunately (purely for research purposes, you understand, mum), I didn't manage to get any phone numbers from him either!

Have you ever stumbled onto a porn bulletin board? Do you think that restrictions on BBs are tight enough? Write to Zog, Comms, TGM, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB and tell us your views on current communications.

INFORMATION DESK

Whether it's problems deciding which computer to buy or difficulties in getting Robin Candy's tips to work, the Centre Bytes crew are always here with a smile and a piece of well-meaning advice.

Which printer?

I own a Commodore 64 and a Citizen 120D 9-pin printer. I now wish to upgrade to 24-pin printer. However, I only have a budget of £500. What do you recommend?

Christian Dexter.

If you want letter-quality results it's really a choice between the Epson LX-500 and the Star LC 24-10. Both boast similar specifications (print speeds of approximately 170-180 characters per second in draft mode and 60 characters per second in letter-quality mode). Until recently they both sold for £458 but Epson have recently announced that the LX-500 is being withdrawn in favour of the LX-550, so you should be able to buy one at a reduced price.

Dungoon Master

The gremlins seem to have crept into last month's ST Dungeon Master cheat. Here's the entire routine again exactly as sent in by **Mark Lawrence** along with Mark's instructions.

```
10 REM ******* Cheat Routine
for Dungeon Master ******
20 OPTION BASE 1: DIM
A%(512): CHEAT
=VARPTR(A%(1))
30 DEF SEG =0: REM Remove
this line if new ST Basic is in
use
40 BLOAD
"A:START.PRG",CHEAT
50 FOR N=1 TO 5: READ B:
POKE CHEAT+B, &H4E71:
POKE CHEAT+B+2, &H4E41:
NEXT N
60 FOR N=&H260 TO &H26E
STEP 2: READ B: POKE
CHEAT+N,B: NEXT N
70 BSAVE "A:START
PRG",CHEAT,770
80 DATA &H00BO, &H00D8,
&HOOFC, &H0118, &H0154
90 DATA &H93C0, &H337C,
&H4E71, &H433B, &H337C,
&HB06B, &H48D9, &H4E92
100 REM
*****************************
**************************
110 REM BEFORE USING THIS
CHEAT MAKE A BACKUP OF
THE FILE START.PRG
120 REM ON THE DUNGEON
MASTER DISK IN CASE YOU
WANT TO PLAY THE GAME
130 REM WITHOUT THE
CHEAT
140 REM ONCE YOU'VE DONE
SO, TYPE IN THIS LISTING
AND INSERT THE
150 REM DUNGEON MASTER
DISK IN DRIVE A THEN RUN
IT. IF YOU NOW LOAD
160 REM THE DUNGEON MAS-
TER GAME AS PER USUAL
YOU'LL HAVE INFINITE
170 REM HEALTH AND
STRENGTH
```

Question time

I've just decided to upgrade from a Spectrum to an Atari ST (the Amiga is a bit to pricey) but there's a few queries I'd like to clear up before I part with my cash.

1) Is the Silica Shop Explorer package worth having?
2) What is the difference between a 0.5 Mb and 1Mb disk drive? How does the difference affect the performance of the ST?
3) What is the ST's sound like?
4) How much better is the Amiga?
5) Are there any differences between Amiga and ST games?
6) Is the sound output through the TV or does the ST feature a built-in speaker?

Alan Deadman, Appleford

1) *Bundles such as the Explorer pack usually represent good value for money. It's all a case of whether you think you'll enjoy playing the bundled software.*
2) *0.5Mb disk drives are only capable of formatting one side of a double sided disk, while a 1Mb drive can format both sides. So if you're using a 0.5Mb drive you get less storage space per disk than a 1Mb drive. You will also experience problems loading software stored on double-sided disks. However, all STs now come fitted as standard with a 1Mb drive so the problem no longer applies.*
3) *The ST uses the same sound chip as the Spectrum +3. However, it does include built-in MIDI ports which are great if you want to link your ST to a synthesizer.*
4) *The Amiga features better built-in sound and graphics.*
5) *Despite producing better graphics and sound than the ST, there are relatively few differences between ST and Amiga games. In general they look the same, play the same but the Amiga almost always sounds better. The differences between the two are only important if you wish to do something with your computer other than play games.*
6) *The 520 ST outputs sound through the TV. For more details on ST and Amiga specifications take a look at this month's hardware guide.*

Spelling errors

My penpal and I can't agree over the correct spelling of disk. He says that it is 'disc' and that 'disk' is the American spelling, but I've noticed that the majority of computer magazines (including yours) spell it with a 'k'.

Leigh Loveday, Port Talbot.

Either spelling is acceptable but strictly speaking the word is 'diskette' and hence 'disk'. Most magazines tend to use 'disk' to distinguish the computer storage medium from other types of disc (such as compact discs).

Console queries

I'm thinking of buying a new console but could you answer a few questions before I make my mind up which one to buy.

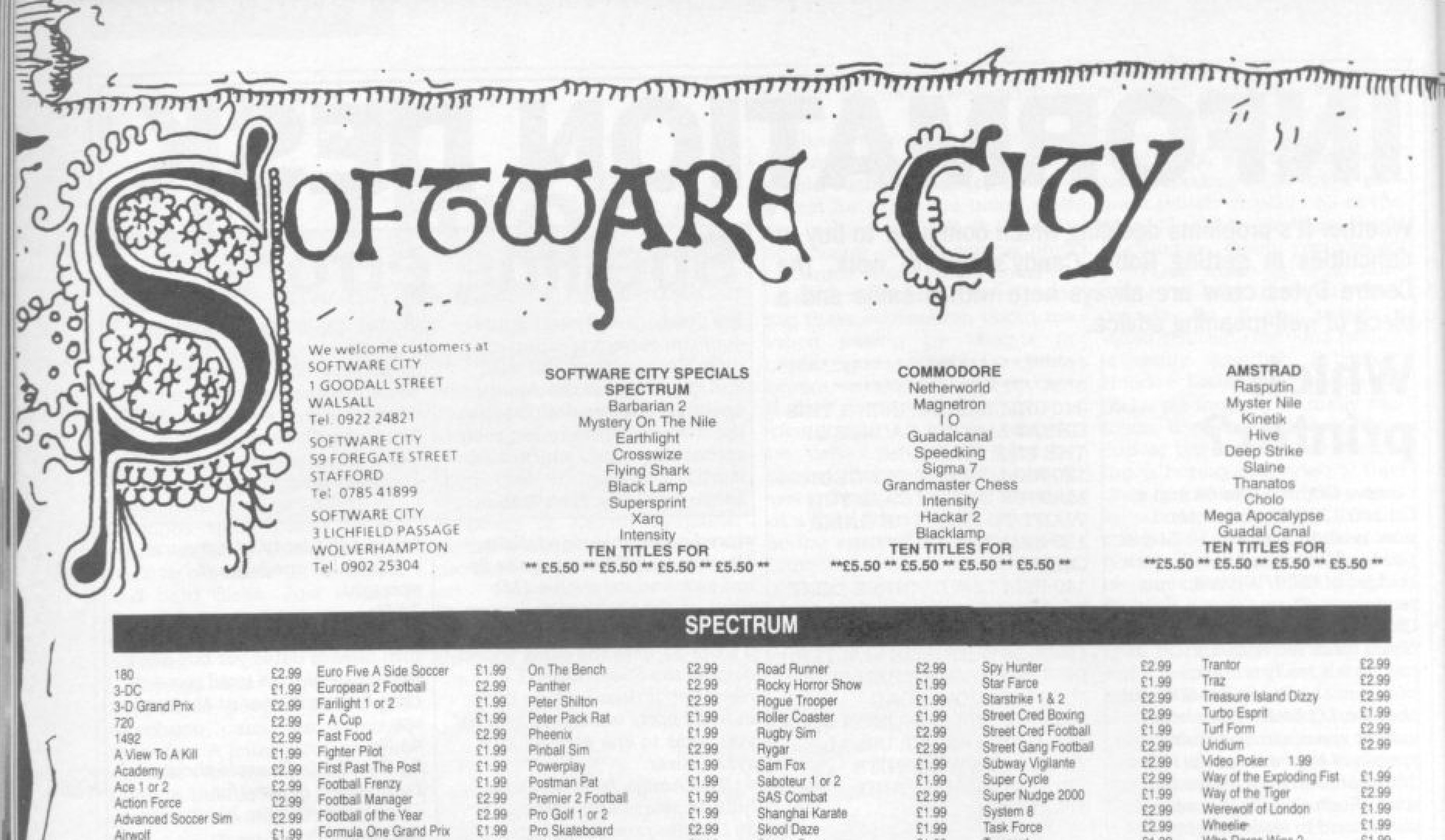
1) Is the PC Engine 8- or 16-bit? If 8-bit, is there going to be a 16-bit PC Engine?
2) Is there such a thing as a 12-bit Nintendo?
3) When is the 16-bit Nintendo coming to the UK?
4) Is there a CD-ROM unit for the Sega Mega Drive?
5) When will the Konix Console be released?
6) Is it worth waiting for?
7) Which is better, the PC Engine or the Sega Mega Drive?

BS Khatr, London

1) *The PC Engine is believed to be 8-bit. To the best of our knowledge there are no plans 'concrete' for 16-bit PC Engine (although plenty of rumours) — the 8-bit one is good enough!*
2) *No.*
3) *We haven't heard of any firm release dates yet but don't expect to see one until sometime late next year at the earliest.*
4) *No.*
5) *The Konix Console should be released in time for Christmas (they're hoping for October).*
6) *Read all about it in the next issue of TGM and decide for yourself. At TGM we reckon it's pretty hot stuff.*
7) *In terms of game quality it's almost impossible to choose between them. However, there are more PC Engine games available in the UK at present, so the PC Engine probably represents a better buy. But, bear in mind that the Sega Mega Drive will be officially released here in the middle of next year, and will have the total backing of Virgin Mastertronic (ie, much better distribution of games).*



Bemused by bitmaps? Conquered by carriage returns? Dazzled by disk drives? Send all your computing questions to Information Desk, TGM, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB. We regret that due to the pressures of magazine schedules, personal correspondence can not be entered into — so no sneaky sending of SAEs just on the off chance you'll get a reply. You won't, and we'll give the stamps to charity.



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Power	16.99	16.99	Gemini Wings	13.99	13.99	Super Soccer	16.99	13.99	Starwars Trilogy	16.99	16.99
Barbarian 2	16.99	N/A	Grand Prix Circuit	N/A	16.99	Populous	16.99	16.99	Story So Far (Ikari Warriors,		
Barbarian 2			Gunship	16.99	16.99	Populous New			Buggy Boy, Battleships &		
(Psygnosis)	N/A	16.99	Hollywood Poker			Worlds	6.99	6.99	IcePalace)	13.99	13.99
Battle Chess	16.99	16.99	Pro	13.99	13.99	Powerdrome	16.99	16.99	Stunt Car	16.99	16.99
Beach Volley	13.99	16.99	Honda RVF 730	16.99	16.99	Precious Metal (Captain			Sword of Sodan	N/A	16.99
Bloodwych	16.99	16.99	Indiana Jones			Blood, Xenon, Arkanoid 2			TV Sports Football	N/A	19.99
Brian Clough's			Last Crusade	13.99	13.99	St Version Super Hang On			Test Drive 2	N/A	16.99
Football Fortunes	9.99	N/A	Kennedy					13.99	Thunderbirds	16.99	16.99
California			Approach	16.99	16.99	Amiga Version Crazy Cars			Times of Lore	16.99	16.99
Challenge (UK)	N/A	6.50	Kenny Dalglish	13.99	13.99		16.99		Tracksuit		
Carrier			Kick Off	13.99	13.99				Manager	13.99	13.99
Command	16.99	16.99	Kult	16.99	16.99	Premier Collection (Zynaps,			U.M.S	16.99	16.99
Conflicts Europe	16.99	16.99	Last Ninja 2	16.99	16.99	Exolon, Nebulus &			Vigilante	13.99	13.99
Crazy Cars 2	13.99	16.99	Lazer Squad	13.99	13.99	Netherworld	19.99	19.99	Vulcan	13.99	N/A
Deluxe Paint 3	N/A	54.99	Leaderboard						War In Middle		
Double Dragon	13.99	13.99	Collection	13.99	16.99	Preditor	N/A	16.99	Earth	13.99	13.99
Dragon Spirit	13.99	13.99	Leisure Larry	13.99	13.99	Quarterback	13.99	13.99	Wayne Gretzky		
Dungeon Master	16.99	16.99	Leisure Larry Look			Quartz	13.99	13.99	Hockey	N/A	16.99
Dungeon Master			For Love	19.99	N/A	Question of Sport	13.99	13.99	Waterloo	N/A	16.99
Editor	6.99	6.99	Licence To Kill	13.99	13.99	R-Type	13.99	16.99	Weird Dreams	16.99	16.99
Dynamite Dux	16.99	13.99	Lombard R.A.C			Red Lightning	19.99	19.99	Xenon 2		
Elite	16.99	16.99	Rally	16.99	16.99	Rick Dangerous	16.99	16.99	Megablast	16.99	16.99
F16 Combat Pilot	16.99	16.99	Lords of the			Risk	13.99	13.99	Xenophobe	16.99	16.99
F16 Falcon	16.99	19.99	Rising Sun	N/A	19.99	Robocop	13.99	16.99			
Falcon Mission			Microprose Soccer	16.99	16.99	Rocket Ranger	16.99	16.99			
Disc	13.99	13.99	Millenium 2.2	16.99	16.99	Running Man	16.99	16.99			

SOFTWARE CITY SPECIALS (SPECTRUM)

Alien Syndrome	£2.99	Mega Apocolypse	£1.99
Alternative World Games	£1.99	Mermaid Madness	£1.99
Armaggedon Man	£2.99	Mr Weeme	£1.99
Barbarian 1 or 2	£2.99	Mystery On The Nile	£1.99
Big Sleaze	£1.99	Nebulus	£1.99
Black Lamp	£1.99	Netherworld	£1.99
Blood Brothers	£1.99	North Star	£1.99
Brave Starr	£1.99	Phantom Club	£2.99
Brave Starr +3 (Disk)	£2.99	Pitfall 2	£1.99
Bubble Bobble	£1.99	Powerplays Compilation	£2.99
Captain America	£1.99	Return of the Jedi	£2.99
Charlie Chaplin	£2.99	Riddlers Den	£1.99
Chubby Gristle	£2.99	Roy of the Rovers	£1.99
Combat School	£2.99	Shoot Out	£2.99
Crosswize	£1.99	Side Arms (Cass & Disk)	£2.99
Cybernoid	£1.99	Sigma 7	£1.99
Desolator	£1.99	Skate Crazy	£1.99
Dream Warrior	£1.99	Space Shuttle	£ 0.99
Earthlight	£1.99	Spectrum Four (Harrier Attack, Scuba Dive, Fat	
Every Second Counts	£2.99	Worm, JungleTrouble)	£2.99
Exolon	£2.99	Street Fighter	£3.99
Explorer	£1.99	Street Sports Basket Ball	£2.99
Fat Worm Blows A Sparky	£1.99	Strip Poker Plus 2	£2.99
Flunky	£1.99	Supreme Challenge (Elite, Ace II, Starglider,	
Flying Shark	£1.99	Tetris, Sentinel)	£5.50
Future Knight	£1.99	Super Sports	£1.99
Gary Linekers Super Skills	£1.99	Super Sprint	£1.99
Guadal Canal	£1.99	Teladon	£1.99
Heartland	£1.99	Ten Computer Hits Vol 5 (Dark Septre, Tarzan,	
Hell Fire Attack	£1.99	Megatron, MegaApocalpse, Traz, Catch 23,	
Hercules	£1.99	Mystery of the Nile, Frightmare, NinjaHamster,	
Heros Of The Lance	£4.99	Droid 2)	£5.50
Hi Frontier	£1.99		
I Of Mask	£1.99	Thanatos	£1.99
Intensity	£1.99	Toy Bizare	£1.99
International Match Day 128K	£2.99	Trans Am (Rom Only)	£2.99
Kayleth	£1.99	Venom Strikes Back	£1.99
Lazer Tag	£1.99	Wizard Warz	£1.99
Loads Of Midnight	£1.99	Zone Trooper	£1.99
Magentron	£1.99		
Maurader	£1.99	Six Pak Vol 2 (Eagles Nest, Batty, Ace, Int	
Martianords	£1.99	Karate, Light Force)	£3.99

AMSTRAD CASSETTE

1942	£2.99	Empire Strikes Back	£2.99	Powerplay	£1.99
Auf Wiedersehen Monty	£1.99	Enduro Racer	£2.99	Premier 2 Football	£1.99
Blood Brothers	£1.99	Epyx on Amstrad (World Games,		Pro Snooker	£2.99
Head Over Heels	£2.99	Imp Mission, Winter Games and		Rambo	£2.99
Mask 1 or 2	£1.99	SuperCycle)	£4.99	Return of the Jedi	£2.99
Bombjack 1 or 2	£1.99	European 2 Football	£1.99	Road Runner	£2.99
Ghost and Goblins & Bombjack 2		Euro 5 A Side Football	£1.99	Rugby Boss	£1.99
£2.99		Fernandez Must Die	£2.99	Rugby Sim	£2.99
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Frank Bruno & Bombjack)	£3.99	Flight Simulator	£1.99	Saboteur 2	£1.99
Cholo	£1.99	Football Manager	£2.99	Sam Fox	£1.99
Chain Reaction	£1.99	Footballer of the Year	£2.99	Scooby Doo	£1.99
Fastfood	£2.99	Frank Bruno's Boxing	£1.99	Skate Crazy	£1.99
Guadal Canal	£1.99	Fruit Machine	£2.99	Slaine	£1.99
Hive	£1.99	Game Over	£2.99	Soccer Boss	£1.99
Kinetik	£1.99	Graham Gooch	£1.99	Solid Gold (Gauntlet, Ace of Aces,	
Mega Apocalypse	£1.99	Grand Prix Sim 1 or 2	£2.99	Leaderboard, Winter Games	
Rasputin	£1.99	Gauntlet 1 or 2	£2.99	andInfiltrator)	£4.99
They Sold a Million (Beach Head,		Ghostbuster	£1.99	Sorceror Lord	£2.99
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The Fury	£2.99	Indoor Soccer	£1.99	Spy Hunter	£2.99
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720	£2.99	Joe Blade 1 or 2	£1.99	Storm Warrior	£1.99
Academy	£2.99	Kikstart 2	£1.99	Street Cred Football	£2.99
Ace 1 or 2	£2.99	Krakout	£2.99	Street Fighter	£2.99
Alternative World Games	£1.99	Kung Fu Master	£2.99	Summer Games	£2.99
American Football	£2.99	Leaderboard	£2.99	Solid Gold (10th Frame, Imp	
Arcade Flight Sim	£2.99	Leaderboard Add On	£2.99	Mission, Rebel Planet,	
Archon Collection	£2.99	League Challenge	£2.99	Dambusters,Bruce Lee and Beach	
Army Moves	£2.99	Lee Enfield - Amazon	£1.99	Head 2)	£4.99
Acrtic Fox	£2.99	Lee Enfield - Tournament	£1.99	Super Cycle	£2.99
Artura	£1.99	Manic Miner	£2.99	Super Nudge 2000	£1.99
Bad Cat	£2.99	Masters of the Universe	£2.99	Supersprint	£1.99
Barry McGuigan's Boxing	£2.99	Matchpoint	£2.99	Tetris	£2.99
Beach Head	£1.99	MIG 29	£2.99	Titanic	£2.99
Beach Head 2	£2.99	Mindtrap	£1.99	Tomcat	£1.99
Big Sleaze	£1.99	Mission Elevator	£2.99	Tour De Force	£1.99
BMX Sim 1 or 2	£2.99	Monte Carlo Casino	£2.99	The Train	£2.99
Bruce Lee	£1.99	Moto Cross Sim	£2.99	Treasure Island Dizzy	£2.99
Commando	£2.99	Nebulus	£1.99	Turbo Esprit	£1.99
Cybernoid	£2.99	Netherworld	£1.99	Turf Form	£2.99
Daley Thompson's Decathlon		Ninja Commando	£2.99	Twin Turbo V8	£2.99
		Pepsi Mad Mix	£1.99	Venom Strikes Back	£1.99
£2.99		Peter Shilton's Handball	£2.99	Way of the Exploding Fist	£1.99
Deep Strike	£1.99	Pinball Sim	£2.99	Wizard Warz	£2.99
Dizzy	£2.99	Postman Pat	£1.99	World Games	£2.99
Eagles Nest	£1.99	Power Boat Sim	£2.99	Yie Ar Kung Fu	£2.99

SOFTWARE CITY SPECIALS

	ST	AMIGA			
Academy	4.99	N/A	Marble Madness	6.99	6.99
Action Service	4.99	4.99	Mickey Mouse	6.99	N/A
Afterburner	9.99	N/A	Mindshadow	4.99	N/A
Archon			Outrun	6.99	6.99
Collection	N/A	6.99	Phantom Fighter	N/A	4.99
Arctic Fox	6.99	6.99	Phobia	N/A	9.99
Art Parts 1 or 2	N/A	6.99	Rambo 3	9.99	N/A
Bard's Tale	6.99	6.99	Rolling Thunder	N/A	6.99
Bionic			Sidearms	N/A	6.99
Commando	6.99	6.99	Skychase	N/A	4.99
Captain Blood	N/A	9.99	Skyfox 2	6.99	6.99
Eliminator	6.99	6.99	Speedball	9.99	9.99
Foundation			Streetfighter	9.99	N/A
Waste	6.99	6.99	Three Stooges	N/A	9.99
Hellbent	N/A	4.99	World Class Leaderboard	6.99	6.99
Hostages	N/A	9.99	World Tour Golf	6.99	6.99
King Of Chicago	N/A	9.99	Zynaps	4.99	N/A
Leather					
Goddesses of					
Phobos 4.99	N/A				

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GUIDE TO REPAIR SERVICES

No matter how much you care for a computer, eventually something goes wrong.

And you can bet your life it'll happen after the guarantee has expired, so you can forget about sending it back to the manufacturers. In most cases, they won't want to know.

Before packing your computer off to a repair firm, check to see if your local computer dealer can recommend a local repair outfit.

Phone the company you choose and try to get a rough guide of the cost of the repair, how long it will take — and whether they'll give a warranty to do it again for free if the repair doesn't work.

Make sure that the quoted price includes parts, labour, VAT, and return postage.

When sending your computer by post, pack it carefully — preferably in the original box.

Always include a letter with your name, address, and telephone number and the effects of the fault.

Send the whole package by recorded delivery — just 24p on top of the stamp cost — and pay the extra cash for an advice-of-delivery slip (25p if you ask for it when you post the package, 65p if you leave it till later).

That way you know it's got there.

■ **A1 Computer Services.**
Unit 9, Paddock Mount Offices, Dawley, Telford, Shropshire TF4 3PR (0952) 502737.
COMPUTERS REPAIRED 'Virtually any computer' — including Spectrum, C64/128, BBC, 16-bits, C16, Vic20 and Plus 4.
PERIPHERALS REPAIRED Printers; also full disk-drive service for £25.
PRICES Mostly £25-£30, but C128 is £42.50.
WARRANTY Three months.

■ **ACE Repairs.**
Outways Farm, Pelynt, Looe, Cornwall, PL13 2NW (0503) 20282.
COMPUTERS REPAIRED Major makes except Atari ST.
PERIPHERALS REPAIRED Sinclair Interface 1 and Microdrive, Amstrad disk drives and printers and Commodore disk drives, printers and datacorders.
PRICES From £15 upwards depending on fault.
WARRANTY Six months.
INFORMATION Sinclair, Amstrad and Commodore spares and leads.

■ **Ampower Video and Computers.**
15A Alcester Rd, Studley, Warks, B80 7AJ (0527) 853374.
COMPUTERS REPAIRED All 8-bit and 16-bit machines.
PERIPHERALS Printers, monitors, disk drives etc.
PRICE Phone for information.
WARRANTY Three months.

■ **BCL (Best Computers Ltd).**
Galaxy Audio Visual, first floor, 230 Tottenham Court Road, London W1A 3AP (01) 631-0139 or 580-6640.
COMPUTERS REPAIRED All 8-bit and 16-bit including PCs.
PERIPHERALS REPAIRED All.
PRICES A typical small repair would cost £15-£20.
WARRANTY Six months.
INFORMATION Free estimates. Galaxy Audio Visual also sell micros.

■ **Cambridge Micro Surgery.**
Unit 4, 377B Cherry Hinton Road, Cambridge CB1 4DH (0223) 410234.
COMPUTERS REPAIRED Spectrum, C64, BBC, Amstrad, PCs.
PERIPHERALS REPAIRED Printers, monitors, disk drives etc.
PRICES Cheapest is 48K Spectrum at £18.95 plus cost of parts; others from £23.50.
WARRANTY Three months.
INFORMATION Will provide annual maintenance for business micros, on a contract basis.

■ **The Computer Factory.**
Analytic Engineering Ltd, Unit 18A, Grainger Road Industrial Estate, Southend SS2 5DD (0707) 618455.
COMPUTERS REPAIRED All major models except Atari.
PERIPHERALS REPAIRED Disk drives and printers.
PRICES £7-£40.
WARRANTY Three months.
INFORMATION Free estimates.

■ **Electronic & Computer Services.**
1000 Uxbridge Road, Hayes, Middlesex UB4 0RL (01) 573-2100.
COMPUTERS REPAIRED The full range of home computers — that includes all the well-known 8-bit and 16-bit machines.
PERIPHERALS REPAIRED Electronic & Computer Services will repair some peripherals, but write or phone for details in case yours isn't included.
PRICES According to the problem. Phone for a quote.
WARRANTY Write or phone for details. The warranty only covers the problem repaired, not the whole computer.
INFORMATION Turnaround varies, depending on the problem, from two days to a week.
Electronic & Computer Services also sell spare parts. Again, write or phone for details.

■ **Hindley Electronics.**
97 Market Street, Hindley, Wigan, Lancashire WN2 3AA (0942) 522743.
COMPUTERS REPAIRED Spectrum, C16/64, Vic20, CPC.
PERIPHERALS REPAIRED Some.
PRICES Set price for each machine, ranging from £17 (48K Spectrum) to £25. 1541 disk drives £32.50.
WARRANTY Three months.
INFORMATION Average two-day turnaround — well quicker than the average.

■ **HS Computer Services.**
Unit 2, The Orchard, Warton, Preston, Lancashire PR4 1BE (0772) 632686.
COMPUTERS REPAIRED All Spectrums.
PERIPHERALS REPAIRED Phone.
PRICES From £14.95.
WARRANTY Three months.

■ **Hytek Computer (Rentals)**
Unit 4C, Yeovale Industrial Estate, Lapford, Crediton, Devon. (03635) 604.
COMPUTER REPAIRED Major makes, including Acorn.
PERIPHERALS Most major makes.
PRICES Fixed price list available on request.
WARRANTY Three months.

■ **Ladbroke Computing International.**
33 Ormskirk Road, Preston, Lancashire PR1 2QP (0772) 21474 or 27236.
COMPUTERS REPAIRED Mainly Atari.
PERIPHERALS REPAIRED Printers and disk drives.
PRICES According to machine — for example ST £34.50, XL/130 XE £23 (these prices include VAT).
WARRANTY Phone for information.

■ **Microtech Computer Services.**
216-219 Cotton Exchange Building, Old Hall Street, Liverpool L3 9LA (051) 236-2208.
COMPUTERS REPAIRED ST, Amiga, BBC, Amstrads.
PERIPHERALS REPAIRED Printers, monitors; also electric typewriters and other office equipment.
PRICES Start from £30 — call Mike Lopez at Microtech for a quote.
WARRANTY Three months.

■ **MP Electronics.**
Wendling, Dereham, Norfolk NR19 2LZ (0362) 87327.
COMPUTERS REPAIRED Spectrum, C64, BBC B, PCs — in fact all major makes except ST and Amiga.
PERIPHERALS REPAIRED Printers, plotters, monitors, disk drives etc.
PRICES All-inclusive prices for most machines — 48K Spectrum £15, 128K Spectrum, BBC B and C64 £27.50, PCs from £20-£100+. These rates cover all faults except those caused by other people's botched repairs!
WARRANTY Phone for information.
INFORMATION Free estimates. £20 repair and overhaul service for 48K Spectrums — MP Electronics replace sockets, keyboard membrane etc and will repair any faults that develop within six months of overhaul.

■ **Ortec Micro Computers.**
ORC GEC ITEC, GEC Switch Gear, Distribution Division, Higher Openshaw, Manchester M11 1FL (061) 301-2210.
COMPUTERS REPAIRED All home micros and PCs.
PERIPHERALS REPAIRED Printers, monitors and disk drives.
PRICES Depends on fault —

Attention repair firms !

If you would like a mention in the Back Bytes repair pages, please send the relevant details to Back Bytes, TGM, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB, including a phone number and the manager's name (for our files).

phone for details.
WARRANTY Three months.

■ RA Electronics.
133 London Road South, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR33 0AX (0502) 566289.
COMPUTERS REPAIRED All Spectrums.
PERIPHERALS REPAIRED Phone.
PRICES Spectrum 48K £14, Spectrum 128K £20.
INFORMATION RA Electronics also sell components.

■ Roebuck Designs.
Victory Works, Birds Hill, Letchworth, Hertfordshire SG6 1HX (0462) 480723 or 480929.
JOYSTICKS REPLACED Roebuck Designs run a clever joystick-replacement service which offers faster turnaround than a repair firm might.

Send in your broken joystick — any model — and they'll send back a second-hand but working stick of the same model. Later, they repair yours and pass it on to another customer.
PRICE £4.50 including return postage.

■ Telegames.
Kilby Bridge, Wigston, Leicestershire LE8 1TE (0533) 880445 or 813606.
CONSOLES REPAIRED Atari VCS2600, Colecovision, Intellivision, Sega.
PERIPHERALS REPAIRED Phone to ask.
PRICES VCS2600 £17.95, Colecovision £14.95, Intellivision £19.95, Sega £14.95.
WARRANTY 90 days.
INFORMATION Telegames promise to return the console to you just three days after they've received it. They're also the official UK repair centre for Sega and Colecovision.

■ Verran Micro-Maintenance.
Albany Park, Frimley Road, Camberley, Surrey GU15 2PL (0276) 66266.
COMPUTERS REPAIRED Spectrum, Amstrad, Commodore.
PERIPHERALS REPAIRED Printers, monitors.
PRICES Range from £19.95 for Spectrum to £95 for Amstrad PC1512.
INFORMATION Established six years. Approved by Amstrad.

■ Video Vault.
140 High Street West, Glossop, Derbyshire SK13 8HJ (04574) 66555.
COMPUTERS REPAIRED Most.
PERIPHERALS REPAIRED Phone.
PRICES From £19.95, according to machine.
WARRANTY Three months.
INFORMATION While-you-wait service in Manchester.

■ VSE Technical Services.
Unit 6, 8 Nursery Road, London SW9 8BP (01) 738-7707.
COMPUTERS REPAIRED All Spectrum, Amstrad, Atari and Commodore models.
PERIPHERALS REPAIRED Opus Discovery drive (partner Ian Vaudrey is official repair-person for the Sinclair Discovery Club).
PRICES Each model has a set price which covers all repairs except very major ones like keyboard or disk-drive replacement. Spectrums range from £12.90 to £17.90; C64 is £19.90, C128 £24.90; CPCs range from £21.90 to £24.90; all PCWs are £31.90.

Parts, labour, VAT and return postage within the UK are all included.
WARRANTY Four months.

■ Wight Computing Home Micros.
122 High Street, Ryde, Isle of Wight PO33 2SU (0983) 68978.
COMPUTERS REPAIRED Most.
PERIPHERALS REPAIRED Printers and monitors, but check first that the service is available for older models.
PRICES According to the problem.
WARRANTY 90 days.
INFORMATION Wight Computing will also check, clean etc computers which are not obviously faulty.

■ WTS Electronics.
Studio Master House, Chaul End Lane, Luton, Bedfordshire LU4 8EZ (0582) 491949.
COMPUTERS REPAIRED All home computers.
PERIPHERALS REPAIRED Printers, disk drives, modems etc.
PRICES 'Very competitive on all models.'
WARRANTY Three months.
INFORMATION WTS Electronics promise to complete the repair within one week from the day they receive the machine. Authorised Amstrad/Sinclair repair firm.

■ Wynter Electronics.
Unit 30F, Atlas Village, Oxgate Lane, Staples Corner, London NW2 7HU (01) 452-5660.
COMPUTERS REPAIRED Spectrum, Commodore, BBC, Atari, PCs.
PERIPHERALS REPAIRED Phone for details.
PRICES £18 upward, depending on machine.
WARRANTY Three months.
INFORMATION Repair done in one week.

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● This voucher is not redeemable against cash or other substitutes.
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GUIDE TO COMPUTER SYSTEMS

***16-bit, 32-bit and consoles (for key to terms and 8-bit see Issue 22)**

32-BIT

ACORN ARCHIMEDES

PRICE There are several models now available the cheapest being the Archimedes A3000 (£649.95) which includes the keyboard with built in 3.5-inch disk drive and mouse. Prices for the other models range from £801 for the Archimedes 305 to £1,280 for the Archimedes 310M which includes a colour monitor and PC emulator.
MEMORY A3000/305 models 512K, 310 models 1Mb.
PROCESSOR 32-bit Acorn ARM, 4 MHz. RISC (Reduced Instruction Set Computing) technology increases program speed.
RESOLUTION Several resolution modes from 320x256 (up to 256 colours onscreen) to 640x512 (up to 16 colours onscreen but needs a multisync monitor).
COLOUR PALETTE 4,096 colours and shades.
SOUND 16 channels (eight left and eight right). Six-octave range. One built-in speaker but stereo output is available. Excellent sound chip rivals many low-cost synthesizers.
VIDEO Composite video and RGB outputs. No TV output.
SOFTWARE FORMAT 3.5-inch disks. Disks can be formatted up to 800K.
PORTS 9-pin mouse socket. 3.5mm stereo jack. RS-423 serial. Centronics-compatible parallel. I/O interface for programs requiring input/output. IEC 320 video outlet. 64-way DIN. 41612 expansion port.
SOFTWARE Still yet to take off in a big way. Although we reckon this will explode with the recent launch of the low-priced A3000 (see News this issue). To date there have been relatively few games but the number is increasing. There are many professional applications packages available as well as some excellent graphics software and impressive music packages.

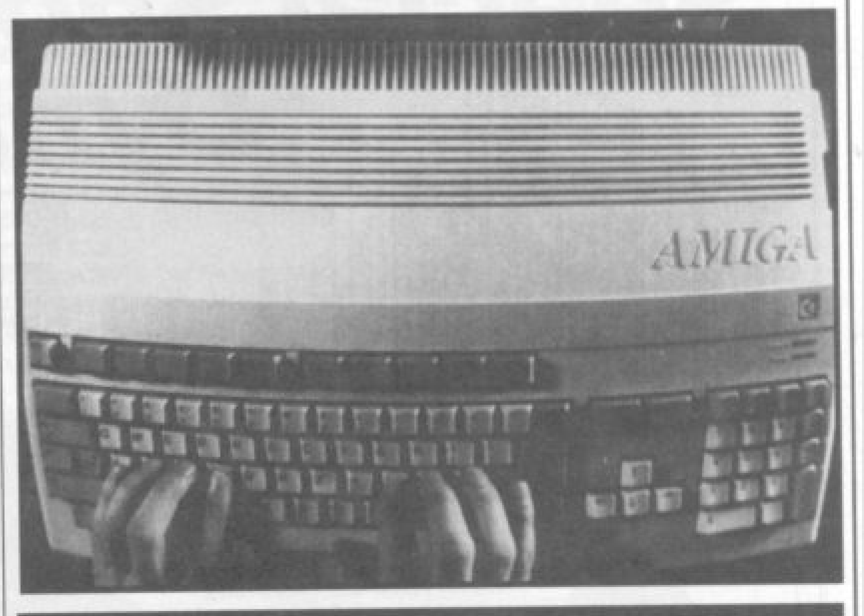
16-BIT

ATARI ST

NOTE A new model, the STE, is to be launched in early October, with improved graphics and sound handling capabilities. This will effectively phase out the present 520STFM model. We recommend you wait for the new model at the same price.
PRICE 520 STFM £299.99, 1040 ST £599.99. Both have one built-in external disk drive. Often available with a lot of 'free' software. Also Mega ST2 (£1,034.99 with mono monitor) and Mega ST4 (£1,379.99 with mono monitor).
MEMORY 520 model 512K, 1040 model 1Mb, Mega ST2 2Mb, Mega ST4 4Mb.
PROCESSOR 16-bit Motorola 68000, 8 MHz. RESOLUTION 640x400 in monochrome display, 640x200 in four-colour display and 320x200 with 16 colours onscreen.
COLOUR PALETTE 512 colours and shades.
SOUND three-channel eight-octave through TV or monitor.
VIDEO RGB. TV port on 520 model, and expected for future 1040 models.
SOFTWARE FORMAT 3.5-inch disks. Earlier 520 models format 360K, while more recent models contain double-sided drives similar to 1040 which formats to 720K.
PORTS 5-pin MIDI in and out. RGB. Serial modem. Two mouse/joystick ports. Cartridge. Second disk drive. Hard disk. TV port (only on 520 model at present).
SOFTWARE Support for the ST has been rapidly growing during 1988. Most new 8-bit releases are now converted to the ST. Though the sound chip is poor compared with the C64 and the Amiga, the ST now dominates music software because of the built-in MIDI ports. Graphics capabilities of the present Atari ST still leave it a poor second to the Amiga.

COMMODORE AMIGA

PRICE The Amiga A500 including one built-in external disk drive, 'free software' and a TV modulator is £399.99. Without software and modulator, they can be found cheaper if you shop around. The Amiga A1000 is only available second-hand. The Amiga A2000 starts at £1,489.25 including mouse. Packages including the A2000, a monitor and a hard disk are also available.
MEMORY A500 model 512K, A1000 model 256K, A2000 model 1Mb.
PROCESSOR 16-bit Motorola 68000, 7.14 MHz. The processor runs slightly slower than the ST's but specialist graphics, video and sound chips help make up the difference through multitasking.
RESOLUTION Several modes from 320x200 (32 colours onscreen) to 640x400 (16 colours onscreen). Some art packages offer an additional Hold And Modify (HAM) mode which allows all 4,096 colours onscreen.
COLOUR PALETTE 4,096 colours and shades.
SOUND Four-channel, nine-octave range. Stereo output through monitor, TV or hi-fi system. Built-in synthesizer 'speaks' typed-in text.
VIDEO No built-in TV port but a modulator is usually included. RGB output to monitor.
SOFTWARE FORMAT 3.5-inch double-sided disks. Formats to 880K.
PORTS Audio left and right, two joystick/mouse, RS-232 serial, Centronics parallel, RGB, additional disk drive, monochrome video, expansion bus. No built-in MIDI port — a serious problem for musicians.
SOFTWARE Most games are now available on the Amiga, with Stateside companies usually supporting the Amiga too. Over 1,000 business and applications programs are available.



IBM PC COMPATIBLES

NOTE The original PC was produced by IBM in 1982. But though IBM are still the largest single PC producer, selling about 28% of all PCs, dozens of others produce 'compatibles' which run the same software and are often seen as better value.
PRICE Prices start from £343.85 (Sinclair Professional PC without monitor) and rise... as high as £9,000 (Compaq DeskPro 386). Affordable models include Commodore PC1 (effectively the cheapest — £369.99 with mono monitor), Olivetti Prodest PC1 (£399 with mono monitor), and Amstrad PC1512 (£458.85 with mono monitor). PCs are usually sold with monitors.
MEMORY From 256K upwards; at least 512K is recommended.
PROCESSOR PC-compatibles are usually described as 16-bit, but in fact there are 8-bit and 32-bit models as well. Early PCs used the 8-bit Intel 8088

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520 STFM 1MEG memory uprade kit, requires soldering	£89.00
520 STFM 1MEG memory upgrade fitted by us	£119.00
1040STFM with built-in TV modulator, 1Mb drive, 1Mb RAM	£399.00
1040STFM 'Games Pack' includes 'Starglider I & II', 'Tracker', 'Virus', 'Sentinel', 'Carrier Command' and 'Flying Shark'	£419.00
1040STFM Hyper Pack, including Hyper Paint, Hyper Draw, 'Organiser' & £50 software voucher redeemable with Atari	£429.00
Mega ST1 with mono monitor	£599.00
Mega ST2 with mono monitor	£849.00
SM124 high resolution monochrome monitor	£119.00
SC1224 colour monitor	£279.00
Megafile 30Mb hard disk, new low price	£439.00
Vortex HDplus 40Mb hard disk	£519.00
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Philips 8CM852 as above, higher resolution	£259.00
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PRINTERS

All prices include VAT/delivery & cable

LC10



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Panasonic KXP1180 super new feature-packed multifont 9pin 11"	£199.00
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NEC P2200 budget 24 pin 168/56cps	£319.00
Epson LX400 (was LX800) budget 10" 180/25 cps	£179.00
Epson LQ550 good 24pin 150/50cps	£319.00
Citizen 120D budget 9pin printer 120cps	£139.00
Citizen HQP-45 bargain wide carriage 24pin printer	£399.00
Mannesmann Tally MT-81 130/24 cps	£149.00

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processor; most now use the 16-bit Intel 8086; and the expensive new generation uses the 16-bit Intel 80286 or 32-bit 80386. Speed on cheap machines ranges from 4.77 MHz (eg Commodore PC1) to 8 MHz (eg Amstrad PC1640).

RESOLUTION Originally designed as a business machine, the PC had very basic graphics. But there are now three major PC colour graphics standards: CGA (Colour Graphics Adapter), at 320x200 (4 colours) or 640x200 (mono); EGA (Enhanced Graphics Adapter) at 640x200 ('200-line mode') or 320x350 ('350-line mode') (both 16 colours);and VGA (Virtual Graphics Array) at 640x480 (2-colour and 16-colour modes). But this is rare and expensive, and doesn't work with standard RGB monitors. Some PC-compatibles have built-in CGA, EGA or VGA — check which — and add-on graphics boards (or 'display adapters') are now available from about £100. There are also many other, rare standards, including Hercules and MDA — both mono only.

If you buy a PC with VGA or EGA and acquire the monitor separately, it's very important to check that the monitor supports the PC's graphics modes!

COLOUR PALETTE EGA 64 colours and shades, CGA 16.

SOUND One channel, but the speed of the processor allows pseudo-three-channel sound to be produced. Not designed as a music machine. However, sound expansions boards are available such as the Adlib and Sierra boards.

VIDEO No TV port. Output usually via RGB.

SOFTWARE FORMAT Older models mainly have one or two external drives for 5.25-inch disks, but 3.5-inch disks and drives are taking over. All drives format disks to 360K; some do more.

PORTS Vary from model to model. Most have expansion, RS-232 serial and Centronics parallel ports.

SOFTWARE Huge range of utilities — word processors etc (because about 25 million PC users worldwide). Also more games than you might expect, largely because of the many PC game-players in America (50% of sales are PCs). However, poor display and sound are problems and PC-compatibles are not recommended if you're only into games, graphics or music. If buying a PC for utilities, check which version of MS-DOS or PC-DOS operating system is supplied — a primitive version older than MS-DOS 3.2 or PC-DOS 2 may cause problems.

CONSOLES

NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM

PRICE The standard version includes console, game controller (used instead of keyboard/joystick) and one game at £99.95. The Deluxe version includes game controller, light gun, ROB (Robotic Operated Buddy) robot and two games at £149.95.

MEMORY Not known, but software cartridges are mostly 256K.

PROCESSOR 8-bit.

RESOLUTION 256x240 (up to 52 colours onscreen).

COLOUR PALETTE 52 colours and shades.

SOUND Three-channel sound including speech synthesis played through a TV.

VIDEO TV only. The Nintendo cannot be used with a monitor.

SOFTWARE FORMAT Special unerasable Nintendo cartridge. Despite some efforts by independent firms, no disk or tape software is available for the Nintendo. The Japanese-owned manufacturer once developed a disk drive but abandoned it because of piracy problems.

PORTS Game controller, TV, cartridge.

SOFTWARE Games only, £20-£25 each. So far little software has been released in the UK, though hundreds are available in Japan and the US Nintendo now promise at least two new games per month in the UK.

SEGA MASTER SYSTEM

PRICE Games console including light gun, game controller and one game retails at £79.95.

RESOLUTION 256x192 (up to 64 colours onscreen).

COLOUR PALETTE 64 colours and shades.

SOUND Three-channel sound played through TV.

VIDEO TV only. The Sega cannot be used with a monitor.

SOFTWARE FORMAT Special unerasable Sega cartridge — no tapes or disks.

PORTS Cartridge slot, two game controller ports (for two-player games) and TV port.

SOFTWARE Games only, mainly conversions of Sega coin-op games. After a lukewarm start, the Sega was selling like hot cakes in early 1989 and we predict good software support, with games often entering the Gallup software chart.

PC ENGINE

PRICE As yet there is no official UK distributor so prices vary from importer to importer. PC Engines can be picked up for as little as £160 on mail order basis.

MEMORY One meg on-board **RAM** and one meg video RAM.

PROCESSOR 8 bit custom chip, with 16-bit graphics chip.

RESOLUTION 256x216, up to 64 sprites onscreen at once.

COLOUR PALETTE 512 colours and shades.

SOUND Six-channel, eight-octave through TV or monitor. Stereo sound via hi-fi or suitable monitor.

VIDEO TV or monitor (via supplied interface).

SOFTWARE FORMAT Special unerasable PC Engine two-meg ROM cards — no tapes or disks. CD-ROM games (loaded from disks like music CDs) are now available at same price.

PORTS Cartridge slot, one joystick/pad port (although five can be connected through Multitap connector), large expansion port (for forthcoming printer).

SOFTWARE We estimate that approximately 60 games are available but this number is rapidly increasing each month. Watch out for TGM reviews.

The next TGM Guide To Hardware (Issue 25/26) will also contain the Konix Multisystem, the Atari STE, and the Sega Mega Drive.



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TOOLBOX ■ Everything but games!

COMMODORE 64

Opportunities
(let's make lots of money)

Any budding Commodore 64 programmers can make themselves a bit of money by sending their programs to Digital Dynamite. Although most software houses require professional standard software, getting up to this standard can take quite some time, during which you're likely to have written some reasonable games or demos. Digital Dynamite want to see anything you've written for the CBM 64; be it games, utilities, demos or music.

They plan to release a series of compilation disks/tapes featuring about 16 programs each — 11 games and the remainder utilities and demos. Your pro-



grams needn't be of professional standards; Digital Dynamite can help improve the presentation to a certain degree but they do insist that programs be of reasonable quality. For full details on how to submit your programs and payment send an SAE.

Digital Dynamite: 54 Watermill Road, Fraserburgh, Grampian, Scotland AB4 5RJ.

ARCHIMEDES

Rendering art

Users of Clares Micro Supplies' ray-tracing art package Render Bender can now get their hands on four demo disks for just £10. Each of the disks features high-quality animation sequences along with Render Bender script files so that other users can see how they were put together. The animations were created by Brian Trott and A Weir both winners in an animation competition run by Archive and Clares. Watch out for an update on all the latest Archimedes software in the next issue of TGM.

Clares Micro Supplies: 98 Middlewich Road, Northwich, Cheshire CW9 7DA. Tel: (0606) 48511.

ATARI ST

The sound of music

Microdeal will shortly be releasing two new music packages. At the time of going to press details were a bit sketchy but the popular ST sound-sampling package Replay will be receiving another update. The latest version is aimed at the more serious musician featuring 8-bit sampling and 12-bit sample playback. There's also a four-channel drum sequencer. The other package, Quartet, is a four channel sample sequencer. Editing is performed either via MIDI input or notes are simply painted onto a music stave using the mouse. More details soon. Microdeal: PO Box 68, St Austell, Cornwall PL25 4YB. Tel: (0726) 68020.

COMMS

Enhanced mailboxes

Prestel launched a new mailbox service on August 22. The previous system only allowed users to send single frame messages to a single recipient at any one time. The new system allows users to send messages of up to five frames in length to up to 12 recipients. Other improvements include five separate mailing lists with each list containing up to 240 names, an instant reply-to-sender facility and a notepad where messages can be stored, edited or re-sent. However, the new changes bring with them new costs. Use of the new features costs 1p per item — prices are also subject to VAT.

Dialcom: Freephone 0800 200 700.

COMMODORE 64

Compact speed

Rainbow Arts should be releasing a Compact Disk to Commodore 64 interface in the UK soon. The product allows the 64 to load games from an ordinary CD player in around 30 seconds. The first CD games compilation features 12 games including the excellent Dropzone, Impossible Mission and Fist II. The games compilation including interface costs just £29.95 (although the CD player is an extra, don't forget!).



ADVENTURE

It's a Myth

Official Secrets is a club formed specifically for fans of adventure, PBM, strategy and D&D games. Membership is £22. For this fee you receive a 32-page A4 bimonthly magazine, helpline facilities, software money-off offers and a free game. Magnetic Scrolls (authors of Fish, Jinxter and The Pawn) have written a mini-adventure free to Official Secrets members and unavailable else where. Myth has received favourable reviews (see this issue's Adventure Column) within the adventure world and is available for most home computers.

Official Secrets: PO Box 847, Harlow, Herts CM21 9PH. Tel: (0279) 600204.

PRINTERS

24-pins for under £450

Citizen are making a bid to dominate the market in low-cost 24-pin printers. It's new Swift 24 (£447) will be launched sometime during the autumn. More details as they become available.

Citizen: Wellington House, 4/10 Cowley Road, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB8 2XW Tel: (0895) 72621.

PC-SHOW

It's a hard life

Without a doubt the best place to go for anyone looking to pick up a bargain in the hardware and software utilities market is the annual PC Show

MULTI-FORMAT

'Ere we go

With a new football season it's time to fill in the Pools coupons again. To help you to the jackpot, Poolswinner (£24) from Selec Software includes a massive database of 22,000 matches over the last ten years. It predicts probabilities of scoredraws, away wins, home wins and no-score draws. Available for BBC, Amiga, Atari ST, PC compatibles, Spectrum and Commodore 64. Selec Software: 62 Altrincham Road, Gatley, Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 4DP. Tel: (061) 428 7425.

at Earls Court. Now in its twelfth year, the PC Show is currently split into two sections: business and leisure. For information about what's going on in the leisure hall see this issue's News column.

Hewlett Packard will be there showing their latest range of Jet printers. Philips will be revealing the newly-launched range of IBM AT-compatibles, there'll also have the new 386SX, PC fax modules and special bundles for show buyers. Many other major distributors will also have special show bargains.



Musicians are well catered for with their own section. Exhibiting in the `music village' will be London's top music store, Pulse. They'll be showing off the latest Yamaha CI/20 music computer. Although it can be totally autonomous (with its own 20Mb hard disk!) the CI/20 is 100% compatible with the PC.

Kuma will be displaying the new version of their K-Spread 3 spreadsheet, available for the ST, Amiga and PC. Bookwise, Kuma are launching their range of titles for the Psion Organiser, plus publications on the Z88, Amiga and PCs. You can also pick up the K-Roget theasaurus at an incredibly low price. There's also a brand-new application product, codenamed Polyfyler, being launched. Visit Kuma for more details.

The final snippet comes from Arnor who are releasing Profile, a new database management program for the ST, Amiga and PC. They'll also be the very latest versions of the successful Protext on sale, with many assciated books.

And don't forget that the PC Show also holds the large gathering of industry know-alls anywhere in Britain, and they'll all be willing to discuss any problems and hear your praises. The PC Show takes place on the 30 September and 1 October at Earls Court in London.

PC

Deluxe improvements

The PC version of Deluxe Paint II was reviewed way back in TGM007. With the right graphics board (ie a MCGA - 256 colours onscreen from a palette of 262,000) it was potentially more powerful than Amiga art programs. Electronic Arts are now set to release an enhanced version (£99.95) with several new useful features.

Anti-aliasing smoothes away jagged lines to give pictures a more natural appearance — extremely useful on digitised pictures. User-defined brushes can be wrapped around any shape. This is great if you wish to draw what is usually a straight forward picture that appears on another object (ie a picture of a face on a can). Just draw your face then wrap it around a cylinder. The computer calculates the position and appearance of the face on the cylinder then draws it for you. Easy!

Various image processing commands allow the contrast and brightness of colours in be adjusted, while there are a number of different techniques to produce a colour palette. Other new features include poster-size printing, multi-colour fonts and a gallery slide show program to display your pictures.

Electronic Arts: Langley Business Centre, 11-49 Station Road, Langley, Near Slough, Berkshire SL3 8YN. Tel (0753) 49442.

ATARI ST

Making movies

ST genlocks aren't easy to come by. If you're looking for one of these devices to mix the ST's RGB output with a video signal for desktop video applications and video titling, Digita International will shortly be releasing Multigen (£199.95) _ it's rumoured to be `professional-quality'.

Digita International: Black Horse House, Exmouth, Devon EX8 1JL.



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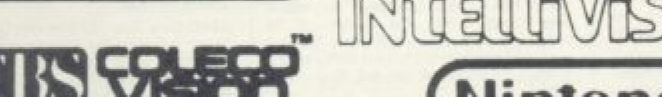
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READER CLASSIFIEDS

WANTED

Atari ST software wanted. Accept both latest and old titles, will pay reasonable price. Swaps welcome. Please send your list to 2A Wyndham Way, Oxford OX2 8DF, England.

ST and Amiga contacts wanted. Don't delay, write today. 100% reply. Guy Hood, 40 Femieside Avenue, Edinburgh EH17 7DN. Also wants tips on Zombi and Police Quest II please.

Sega 3D glasses and 3D game. Plus any other games especially Kung Fu Kid, Black Belt, Enduro Racer and California games. Phone (01) 423 5851 after 6pm.

PC Engine desperately wanted. Will swap for my Atari STFM, including joysticks, over £300 of original software, disk and box. OR will sell it for £230 ono. Phone 0964 614053.

Atari 520 ST software wanted. Tel. Derby 366978.

FOR SALE

Atari ST for sale! STFM with 10 games, joystick £300. Phone Paul on 01 467 2518 after 5pm.

CBM Amiga A500, joystick, over 50 games and demos £500. Phone Paul on 01 467 2518 after 5pm.

Atari 1040ST, boxed. Mint condition. Joysticks, mice, SC1224 colour monitor, SMM804 printer, £900 games software. Worth over £1,900, will sell for £700!!! Will sell monitor and printer separately. Phone (0322) 863 656, ask for Darren.

Tricks, Tips + Pokes for any computer. Atari, Amiga, Ams, Spec, Comm. Send £1 to David Hunte, 88 Swinderby Road, Wembley, Middx. HA0 4SG. First hundred people get Tricks, Tips + Pokes for any game.

ZX Spectrum 48K, Lo-profile keyboard, Comp-Pro joystick, RAM Turbo interface, well over £350 worth of software, all original. All for just £80. Tel 023 57 66751.

Sega console with 27 games e.g. Altered Beast, Rastan, Vigilante, Time Soldiers, Rampage, R-Type, Shinobi, 2 control pads, Rapid Fire, Konix joystick. Excellent condition. Worth £750 sell for £300. Offers welcome. Phone (0254) 53195.

Magazines. Spectrum, 86-88, Crash 1-50, Y.Sinclair, S.User etc over 70 mags - £30. Commodore 84-87, C.User, Zzap!64 1-29, Your 64 etc over 90 mags - £30. Over 70 multiformat mags £30 or the lot £80. Excellent condition. Basingstoke 762310. Buyer collects.

Atari 520STFM, still boxed, under guarantee, 6 months old, 1 Mbdrive, Rocket Ranger, Licence to Kill, Indiana Jones, Hostages, Battlehawks 1942, Falcon, Falcon Mission disk, Red Heat and many more. Also Sega system with Sega joystick, Space Harrier, Astro Warrior and Hang-on. Everything here for £300. Phone 07375 54286 after 6.00pm.

Amiga games, all original, all like new, all Top Ten, all cheap, more you buy the cheaper they get. Phone Craig (0992) 32102. 142B High Street, Cheshunt, Herts. EN8 0AW.

C128, disk drive, daisywheel printer, 1901 colour monitor, datasette, 3 joysticks, word proc., Garry Kitchen's Game Maker, £200 worth of disk and tape games, all manuals, leads, etc... Worth £1200, sell for £799. Call James on 061 980 1169.

Sega, boxed, 17 games, 2 joypads, v.g.c. Worth £440, will sell for £249 ono. Also selling some CBM 64 stuff. Contact Stephen 01 204 5906.

48K Spectrum+ (with new key membrane), over £530 of games, AMX mouse, data-recorder, 42 tapes from various magazines for free. All worth over £700, sell for £250. Buyer collects. Tel (0942) 875011. 7 Briarcroft Drive, Howebridge, Atherton, Manchester M29 0PJ.

Atari 520 STFM, 1 meg second drive, various PD + mags + Basic £250 ono. Phone (0702) 219926 after 6pm.

Bugs! Miniature FM transmitters, size 30x20x10mm, 1000m range, uses 9 Volt PP3 battery, receive on any household FM/VHF radio, £15. Tel No. (0908) 661551. Ask for Mr Kim F. Li. Phone after 4pm.

MSX software sale, inc DTP, WP, games carts, mags, books. SAE list. Dennerly, 8 Sedgley Park Road, Prestwich, Manchester M25 8AN.

Atari 520STFM, plus Multiface, over £600 worth of software and joystick, £350 ono. Phone Dave on Swindon (0793) 881198 after 6pm.

Atari 520 STFM for sale with over forty games. Excellent condition worth over £1200, will sell for £420 ono or will swap for Amiga with games. Phone 021 378 0472 anytime. Eg Falcon, Voyager, Robocop, Vindicators, Millenium 2.2.

Atari ST 1Mb, boxed, manuals, 3 months old, 2 joysticks, mouse and mat, PD disks, loads of games (incl. Populous, Falcon & Kick Off). Worth £1000 sell for £525 ono. Phone Sam on 061 766 6854 Manchester. Buyer collects.

Sega Master system, 2 joypads, 1 joystick, 10 games (Double Dragon, Outrun, After Burner, Thunder Blade etc). Still boxed, good condition, worth £300; will sell for £150 ono. 01 267 5724. Bailey.

Amiga animation software: The Director (£20), Fantavision (£15), Deluxe Video 1-2 (£25) or the lot for £50! Please send SAE to Tim Leighton, 6A Bath Terrace, Tynemouth, Tyne & Wear NE30 4BL.

ST Superpack software for sale. 20 games including Buggy Boy, Test Drive, Black Lamp, Xenon, Wizball, Arkanoid 2, Ikari Warriors, Quadralien, Thundercats, Thrust, Zynaps and many more. Wort over £400, just £35. Tel. (0273) 463886.

Amstrad CPC464, colour monitor, manual, joysticks, magazines, £600+ worth of software. Ideal for programs, business games, education. Offers over £400 please. Phone Matthew on Kingston upon Thames 5464175. £££Free personal stereo£££

ST PD's! From £1.50. Send a SAE for details or send £1.50 for details £1.50 for details plus a disk full of games and demo's. Contact D Cook, 28 Long Bank, Birtley, Chester-Le-Street, County Durham DH3 1PU.

Sega console plus 2 RF units, gun and 29 games including Shinobi, Double Dragon, Out Run, R-Type, Golevius, Zillion 1 and 2. Many more. Excellent condition. Worth £800 selling for £400. Tel. (01) 804 6754 (ask for Peter).

C64 software for sale. New and old. Prices between £1 and £10. Send SAE for your list: Micheal, 43 Clarendon Road West, Chorlton cum Hardy, Manchester M21 1RN.

Sega system, 2 months old. Worth £240, sell for £100. 7 games including Rastan, Wonderboy, Soccer, Space Harrier and Alex K.M.W. Chris Greenaway, 54 Chapel Street, Wibsey, Bradford, West Yorks. BD6 1LN. Tel. 0274 675242.

Amiga 500, external drive, £600 of original software, 420 disks, 2 joysticks, mousemat, 3 disk boxes, loads of mags, all in excellent condition, worth over £1000, sell for £450 ono or swap for PC Engine + PAL converter plus cash. Ring Eric on 0964 612104. Now!

Amiga A500, Kick Start 1.3, Work Bench 1.3, 3 months old, Protext word processor, Photon Paint, 10 Star games pack, PD disks, Gauntlet II, Elite & more, books & mags. Offers: Mark on 0376 70131.

Sega Master system, good condition, plus over £200 worth of games, worth altogether over £300. Will sell only £100. Phone Navid on (01) 993 8502.

Sega system £30.00. Also games Kenseiden, Shinobi, Phantasy Star £15.00 each. Zillion 2, Enduro Racer, OutRun £10.00 each. Commodore 64 with 9 games, mouse, still boxed £100.00 ono. Newcastle 0632 2735585.

Amiga games: Blood Money, Virus, Archipelagos £10 each. Also Carrier Command and Starglider 2 £15 for both! Xenon, Mercenary, Jinxter, Guild of Thieves, Shadowgate £5 each. Lots more! Contact Reuben Wilkinson at: Harbledown, Westland Green, Little Hadham, Herts. SG11 2AQ. Phone (027984) 2675.

C64, 1541c disk drive, diskbox, Action Replay, over 100 games, many mags, CU, Zzap!, Input, joysticks, all in excellent condition, will split. £300 ono. Tel: 01 556 4716 after 4pm. All still boxed.

PC Engine and Sega games, for Sega over 60, PC Engine over 15. For full price list write to Chopra, 67 Laitwood Road, London SW12 9QH. £20 for PC Engine, £14 for Sega. Hurry.

CBM 64 games for sale. Disk only. £2.50 to £4.50 each plus 50p P+P each. Phone 0784 458224 between 5.15pm and 7.30pm Mon to Fri only. Call at the stated times only.

C64 for sale! With Excelerator+ disk drive, Expert cartridge, Turbo ROM, loads of games. All for £200!!! Phone Dave on (01) 555 4542 after 6.30pm.

Amiga games for sale!! Blasteroids, Space Harrier, Pac-Mania £8 each, Zak McKracken, Lords of the Rising Sun, The Kristal £12 each. Phone Dave on (01) 555 4542 after 6.30pm.

C128, disk drive, C2N cassette, mouse, joystick, over £600 of software. Will sell the lot for £250 ono. Phone Alex on (0622) 681680 after 6pm.

Spectrum 128, plus everything that you can think of. Microdrive plus cartridges, Multiface, printer, light rifle, speech synthesizer, over £1000 of games all over 90%, Crash 87-89. Ring for details (02404) 5560.

Spectrum worth £263, sell for £130 with 13 games and loads of mags. Also games for sale worth £291, sell for £145 or both worth £555 at an amazing price of only £275. Ring 01 737 5355 and ask for Justin.

CBS Colecovision and 23 games including Roller and Super Action controllers. Worth over £850 but will sell for £199. Phone 0625 585480 and ask for Sai Ming Wong.

Amiga, monitor, external drive, 0.5 meg memory expansion, approx. 35 games including Dragons Lair, Elite, Three Stooges, Rocket Ranger, all leads, joystick, also D.Paint II, Photon Paint. Best offer around £850 secures. Matthew Green, 7 Lodgecourt 296/8, High Road, Leavesden, Watford, Herts. WD2 7PQ.

Amstrad games, all originals, mint condition, on cassette, latest titles including Robocop, Barbarian 2, Operation Wolf, Nebulus and many more at bargain prices. Send SAE for list to David Mitchell, 1 Manor Close, Ivybridge, Devon PL21 9BQ. Tel. 0752 893327.

Atari ST Public Domain software. Many titles including music, graphics and games. All at reasonable prices. For list send a large SAE to Alastair Craig, 63 Wintringham Way, Purley on Thames, Reading, Berkshire RG8 8BH.

Sega console plus 8 games and two joypads for sale. VGC. Sell for £120 ono. If interested contact Matt at (0494) 783203 or write to 60 Poles Hills, Chesham, Bucks. HP5 2QR. Must be able to collect or P&P £15.

Amstrad CPC games for sale. All originals from 50p for tape £3.00 for disks. Over 270 titles. Send SAE to Mr R Harmer, 10 Crescent Rise, New Barnet, Herts. EN4 9RR.

Atari 520 STFM original software for sale. Space Quest 3, Millenium 2.2, Purple Saturn Day £12 each or three for £30. Boxed. D/sided drive needed for SQ3. Phone Royston (0763) 246424.

CBM64, two joysticks, mouse, cheese, two data cassettes, over £600 games: Forgotten World, Phobia, Armalyte, Denarius, Ninja II, Speedball, M.Prose Soccer, Bomb Buzzle, Operation Wolf plus loads more. Originals. £250 ono. Tel 061 370 0797 after 5pm.

Atari 520 STFM for sale. Mint condition, 14 months old, with mouse, over £150 software inc Robocop and Eliminator. It's a great bargain and the cheapest ST around at £220. Must collect from Twickenham. Phone (01) 894 0442 for details.

Spectrum +3, 100+ mags, Multiface +3, two joysticks, tapes, tape recorder, books, disk box, 40+ original disk games, further 30+ disk of software off tapes (original), leads (inc. printer lead) and more!!! Offers £250ish. Phone Gary 01 657 5152. Delivery possible.

Sega games system with four joysticks and 26 games for sale. Includes Rocky, Outrun, Space Harrier, Ninja. Worth over £600, bargain at £250. Boxed. Phone (04022) 25201 now!!

Amstrad PCW 8256 with printer, built-in disk drive and Loco Script. Good working condition - £175.00. Phone Aberdeen (0224) 823169 anytime.

Atari 520 STFM, 4 joysticks, over £400 of software including 1st Word Plus (WP), STOS, Populous, R-Type, Dungeon Master, Oids, Xenon. All boxed as new. Worth over £800. Will sell for £350 ono. (0372) 720690.

Atari 520 STFM, hardly used, boxed as new, with software Speedball, Dungeon Master etc, 20 blank disks, 5 PD disks and other system disks. Phone Brad on 0843 850368 for quick sale.

Amstrad 6128, green monitor, tape recorder, joystick, software mainly disk: Protext, Mini Office II, Pirates, Sport, War, Chess, Scrabble etc., manual, mags. Worth £600, accept £250. Tel. 0724-867454, Scunthorpe.

Sega for sale, 9 games including Double Dragon, Shinobi, Outrun, Wonder 2, Alien Syndrome, 3 joysticks, Rapid Fire unit. Boxed. All perfect condition. Items sold separately. Games £10-£13, all for £150. Tel. Tiptree (0621) 815135. Buy what you like. Ring Tiptree (0621) 815135.

Amstrad CPC 6128 with colour monitor, tape deck and leads, joystick, books and magazines, and over £250 worth of disk - tape software. 3 month old, excellent condition, £350. Call Marc (0378) 73195 (Essex).

CBM 64, C2N cassette plus 1520 printer/plotter plus £400 of original software including assembler plus numerous books and programming guides plus over 100 magazines. Only £200. Phone Bristol 643534 after 5.30pm.

BBC B computer + drive (double sided/density) + PCU worth £50.00 +£££'s of original software + endless hints/cheats for games + lots literature + 32K RAM board + twin joysticks. Everything boxed, excellent condition, excellent bargain. Tel. 01 570 1982 now!!!

Amiga games inc. Lords of Rising Sun, Bio Challenge, War in Middle Earth, Wizball, Terror-Pods, Ski Simulator + many more. Phone Andrew on (01) 650 1750.

Amstrad CPC 464, colour monitor, speech synth, joystick, 100 games and lots of mags. Worth a lot but sell for £250. Phone 943 1027 Glasgow for details. Evenings only. Quick buy now! The price can be made suitable to you!

Demos! Demos! Demos! All the latest, greatest PD demo's from around the world! You won't believe your eyes and ears. From £1 a disk. Send SAE to: M S, 15 Turner Street, Manchester M4 1DY. NOW! NOW! NOW!

MISCELLANEOUS

Public Domain for Amiga and Atari ST. Wide range available at very low prices. (Music, graphics, latest demos etc). Send a large SAE for full catalogue to E.S. (TGM), 4 Trelawney Drive, Reading, Berks. RG3 5WQ.

Competition!! To win brand-new ST Xenon, Scruples. To enter please send £1 with SAE to: H H Cheung, 1 St Andrews Grove, Harrogate HG2 7RP. Disks, Amiga PD for sale, to pass messages, letters, programs, hints to other Amiga user. Send SAE.

Amiga Tips & Cheats Disk Issue Two contains hints, cheats, listings, tips for over 50 top Amiga games all on one disk. Send SAE and the astounding price of £3. Send money to Mr J S Smith, 45 Maplecroft Crescent, Sheffield SP 1DN.

Competition!! To win brand-new ST Xenon and Scruples. To enter please send a pound with SAE to: H H Cheung, 1 St. Andrews Grove, Harrogate HG2 7RP. Send it before 2/12/89. Thank you!!

Wild Side Public Domain for Amigas. £1.95 per disk. Mostly demo's but no rubbish. Send stamp for list and newsletter to: Wild Side, 4 Smythsons Close, School Aycliffe, Co. Durham DL5 6TB.

£100,000 - This is guaranteed to members of an exclusive club. Forget those cons and chain-letters. This is real! Send SAE to Gary Chase, 20 Foxearth Road, Selsdon, Surrey CR2 8ED. What have you got to lose?

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Make real money in your spare time! With Money Makers the exclusive guide to earning extra cash, out now. Rush SAE for details to Alex Bunch, 385 Bideford Green, Linslade, Leighton Buzzard, Beds. (Dept GM).

Loadsamoney, if you want to know how you too, could make hundreds of pounds in your spare time, at home, please send a large SAE to Wai Tong Chan, 16 Portobello Road, Portobello, Wakefield WF2 7JJ. Get a move on!

Sound amplifier. Very powerful 10W amplifier plugs into C64/128, Walkman, or anything that will power an amplifier. Can run two hi-fi speakers. For details send SAE to Fletch, 152 Kingsley Road, Kingswinford, West Midlands DY6 9RP.

Amazing m/c program which enables solid sprites to be put in the side aswell as the bottom borders. Excellent for demo's. For details send SAE to: Fletch, 152 Kingsley Road, Kingswinford, West Midlands DY6 9RP.

PEN PALS

C64, Atari ST, IBM user seeks contacts all over the world. 100% reply, Please state machine. Write to George Kumahlo, 24 Lily Ave, North Cliff, 2193 Johannesburgh, Republic of South Africa.

Amiga contacts wanted. Write to: Steve, 12 Monet Court, Norwood, Waterford, Eire. 100% reply guaranteed.

Amiga contacts wanted. Write to Leon, 27 Cliffedge, Paddock Drive, Bembridge, Isle of Wight, England. Get writing!! Mega banana to: Tony, Mark, Adam, Darren, Robert.

Amiga contacts wanted worldwide. To swap hints and tips etc. Contact Johnny at 10 Marlo Crescent, Bangor, Co Down, N.I. BT19 2SU or phone (0247) 450411. No lamers!

Atari ST contacts wanted. Write to: Will Frost, 19 Worksop Road, Woodsetts, Worksop, Notts. S81 8RW. All letters answered.

Amiga contacts wanted. Beginners helped if postage paid. 100% reply - Daz, 8 Empress Drive, North Shore, Blackpool FY2 9SE.

Australian Amiga owner seeks worldwide contacts for all uses. Send letters/disks/lists to Phil, 23 Third Street, Millicent SA 5280 for an instant 100% reply. Weekly titles include latest.

Amiga contacts wanted to swap hints, tips, etc. All letters answered. Send stuff to Rick, 21 Ardmillan Gardens, Bangor, Co Down, N. Ireland or phone (0247) 959488 and ask for Rick.

Amiga contacts wanted. For fast reply write to: Mike, 126 Longton Lane, Rainhill, Prescot, Merseyside L35 8PA. Tel. (051) 426 7321.

Atari ST contacts wanted from anywhere in the world. Must be in with the latest news. 01 204 5688 or write to 33 Brampton Road, Kingsbury, London NW9 9BX. Ask for Rajeev. PS: I really love demos.

Amiga contacts wanted, Write to Richard, 13 Whinney Moor Lane, Retford, Notts. DN22 7AA. 100% reply.

Amiga contacts wanted. Write to Daryl, 18 Rowdon Ave, London NW10 2AL. Remember the earlier you reply the faster you'll get one! 100% reply to everyone.

Amiga and C64 contacts wanted to swap demos, utilities, etc with. Write to Thomas Lassfolk, 64250 Pjelax, Finland.

Amiga contacts required. Write to: Jim Tominey, 1243 Argyle St, Glasgow G3 8TH. Write now for guaranteed reply.

Atari ST, Cyberpunk, SF, comics, film buffs, Hip Hop contacts wanted anywhere in the world, especially Continental Europe, USA and Japan. Write to CP, Box 3003, IS- 123 Reykjavik, Iceland.

Atari ST owner seeks contacts from all over the world, 100% reply. Write to Ricki Molland, 56 Meadow Croft, Sutton, St Helens, Merseyside, England, WA9 3XQ. Tel: 0744 817751.

Amiga contacts wanted preferably group members and demo programmers to exchange tips, information etc... Write to John Bezzina, 26 Tower Street, Msida, Malta.

Amiga contacts wanted to swap all the latest. Send disks and list to: Bal, 144 Whalley New Road, Blackburn, Lancashire BB1 6LB. 100% reply.

USER GROUPS

Cheapest in Britain! Public Domain for Atari ST. New catalogues, 100's of new bargains from 75p per disk. Also discount commercial software. Send A5 SAE to ~Paradise Computers, 9 Westfield, Brighton, TGM, Sussex BN1 8JB.

ST-PD Club. Over 150 titles from £2. All disks include free magazine, calendar and presentation screen load!! Send SSAE to: 16 Bruce House, Headlam Road, London SW4 8LT. Please state either art, games or utilities.

16 bit programmers wanted to get together to exchange techniques and pool resources and ideas. Phone Mike Sadler on 01 947 4206 now!

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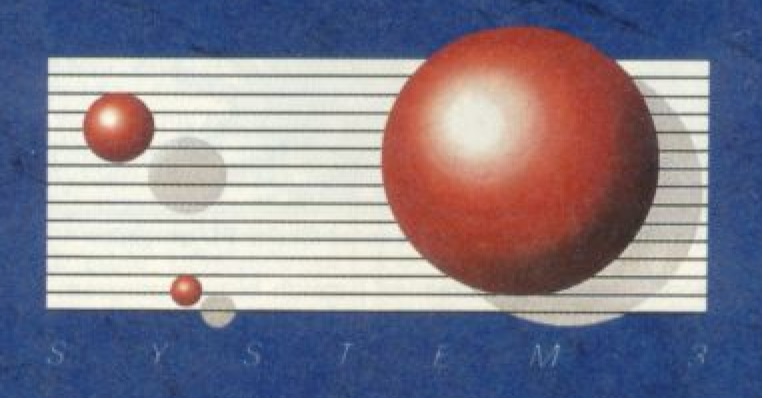
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You were going to do so many things with your new computer: organise your accounts, write letters, play games, draw pretty pictures and make wonderful music. But after buying your new system there's little cash left to get your software collection off to the flying start you were dreaming of. However, for the price of a few disks, a trip through public domain libraries can provide a whole host of goodies. Robin Candy takes a look at a random selection of public domain (PD) software.



Not all rubbish: an example of some flashy PD graphics

We've all seen pictures of flashy public domain demos — current favourites include the Amiga Walker 2 demo where an ATAT vehicle from the Star Wars films is attacked by a helicopter. It's stunning but such demos can easily fool you into believing that public domain software is all about slick graphics and pounding music. It's not. Wherever your interests lie in computing, from programming to playing games, you can be sure that there is a public domain disk for you. That's why future TGM guides will include not only reviews of commercially available programs but also low-cost alternatives from public domain libraries.

Public domain software is usually copyright free so it can be copied and distributed without infringing any laws. Usually the only restriction placed on the user is that they don't try to sell the software as their own. For this reason public domain software can be bought for little more than the price of the disk it comes on, usually between £1.50 and £3 per disk.

Many public domain libraries also sell 'shareware'. The author of a shareware program requests that you send him a small fee if you regularly use his program. This fee usually entitles you to free updates and technical support. However, sometimes the program is only a demo of a much bigger program and the fee will buy you the complete version. Nevertheless, shareware is a great way of evaluating software before you buy.

ATARI ST

FIRST WORD
Kingsway Computers Services: Disk WP2

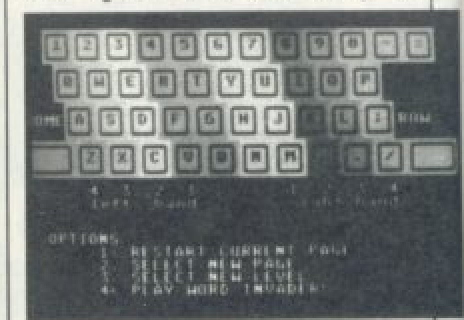
This was originally bundled with the ST a few years back but has since found its way into the public domain. However, Atari have informed some libraries that it is no longer public domain while letting others continue selling it. So if you're interested, snap it up quickly!

First Word is the little brother to First Word Plus (as reviewed in the TGM020 Guide to Word Processors). It features several styles of text (including bold, italic, super- and subscript), adjustable margins, simple block cut and paste options and an onscreen help facility. It's hardly Word Perfect but then again it's not selling for £200! It's very easy to use (you don't really need instructions).

If you only need a word processor for the odd letter, then this makes an attractive buy.

TYPING TUTOR/WORD INVADERS
Kingsway Computer Services: Disk WP7

Both of the programs on this disk are intended to improve the speed and accuracy of your typing. Typing Tutor displays a screen full of letters and punctuation symbols etc which you've got to type in as fast as possible. If you make too many errors or your typing isn't fast enough then it's back to the start of the screen. If your typing is acceptable then you progress to trickier screens. Not very inspiring.



Word Invaders, on the other hand, is a much more enjoyable way to improve your typing skills. A space invader drops words at a steady rate which you've got to zap by typing in the appropriate keys. The higher the skill level the faster the invader drops words. It seems really simple but it is actually quite enjoyable. But does it improve your typing? Well after 15 minutes of blasting my typing speed was nine words a minute faster than my first go — though I'm not sure how long term this improvement will be.

MATHS/SPELLING MADE EASY
Riverdene PDL: Disk 125

Home computers have rarely been put to educational use, which is a real shame when educational psychology research suggests that computers can be an invaluable learning aid. However, much of the educational software available is in fact public domain. The two programs on this disk are definitely aimed at very early learners.

Maths Made Easy teaches very simple maths. The user is presented with four options: addition, subtraction, division and multiplication. A series of questions then follow on the chosen topic. Unfortunately, they're very easy and there are no skill levels. So once the simple

questions have been solved there's no point in using the program.

Spelling Made Easy is a bit more flexible. Parents enter a series of words into the computer which the child is then tested on. The computer tests the child by actually speaking the words. My guess is that the program uses allophones to calculate how a word is spoken — the computer analyses letter combinations within a word and uses these to approximate speech. However, English is rarely spoken as it is written so you can end up with some peculiar sounds emanating from your ST. To be honest I think children will prefer entering their own words into the computer just to see what they can get it to say (well I certainly did).

ADDRESS BOOK/ST WRITER

Goodman PDL

The address database program allows up to 1024 records when used as a stand alone program or 256 records when used as a desktop accessory. The entire file or single entries can be printed out.

ST Writer is a public domain word processor from Atari. Unlike most ST word processors it doesn't run in a WIMP (Windows, Icons, Mouse, Pull-down menus) environment — all options are available from a main menu or via key combinations (such as CONTROL and P for indenting). Editing functions include block cut and move, and word search and replace. The word search and replace options will either replace all instances of a chosen word with a new word (known as global replace) or will ask the user to confirm each case (known as veto replace). Once you've learned the key combinations, it is just as straightforward to use as a WIMP word processor. When used in combination with the spell checker (also included on the same disk) it makes for an excellent low-cost word processor.

Finally there's a spreadsheet program included on the disk to help organise your accounts.

VARIOUS DISK UTILITIES

Goodman PDL

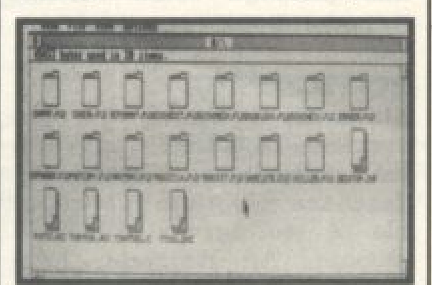
Includes a disk copier, disk format checker and a disk sector editor. Something you always wish you had, but never knew where to get it from.

VARIOUS DATABASES

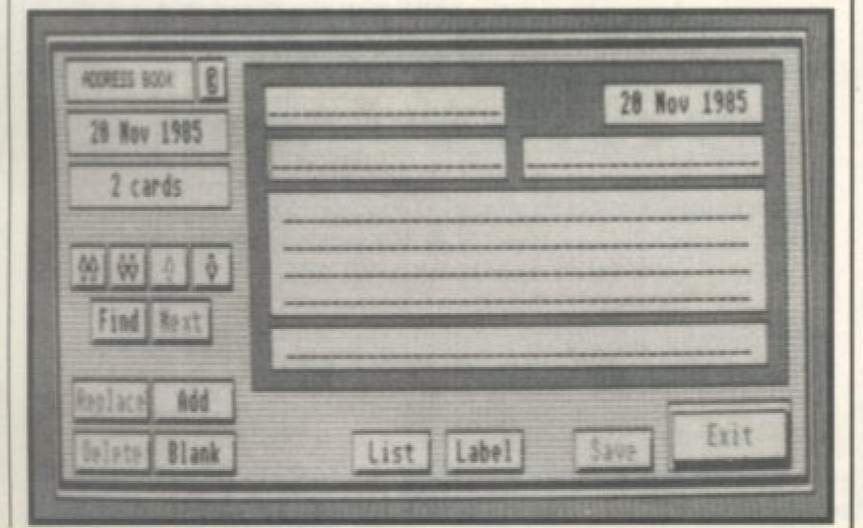
Goodman PDL

Anyone wishing to catalogue a collection will benefit from buying this disk. First Base can store up to 6000 records of just about anything from addresses to stamp collections. If you've got a sizeable record collection there's a program designed specifically for you it can cope with all formats of music (vinyl, tape and CD) and store hundreds of entries.

One oddity on the disk is a biorhythms program.



Biorhythms are cyclically occuring physiological states which are believed by some to affect our physical and mental states and consequently our behaviour. There are three states: the physical, the emotional and the intellectual. The cycles for each state last for different amounts of time and during each cycle a state will climb to a high and dip to a low in a regular pattern. The position of a state (ie, whether



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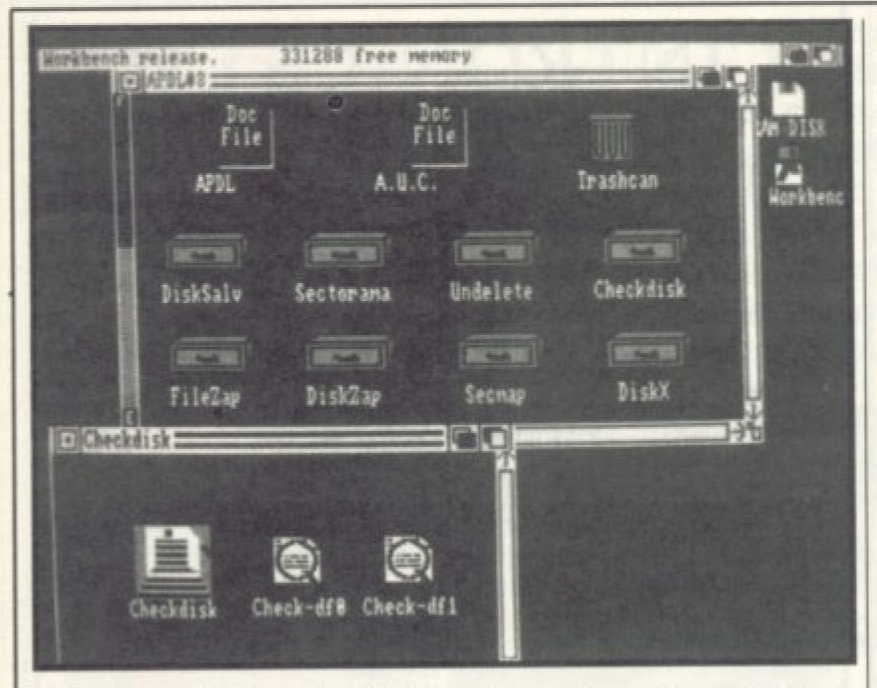
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it is in a positive or negative position) has some baring on our character at that time. However, it is only by studying the positions of all three states relative to each other that we get a complete picture of our character at that time. As the three states' cycles last for differing periods of time they are rarely in the same position so you will rarely be feeling totally good or totally bad. Some people who strongly believe in biorhythms refuse to sign important contracts or make important decisions on days when the states are adversely positioned since their judgement may be impaired on those days.

The biorhythms program requires the user to enter their date of birth. The program then displays the positions of the three states for any given month. Making it easy to pinpoint good and bad days.

DISK UTILITIES
Kingsway Computer Services: Disk APDL 6

If you use your Amiga for applications other than games you're likely to be frequently organising saved files. Disk 6 contains a range of utilities to make disk organisation easier. Most of the programs are concerned with copying files between disks and directories but there are a couple of miscellaneous programs which may interest some people.

MYCLI is replacement for the Amiga's command line editor. It offers 24 built-in commands such as dir, delete and copy. Frequently used combinations of commands can be assigned to the function keys while the line editing functions have also been greatly improved.

Disk-2-Disk is a demo of a utility that may prove useful to Amiga owners who also own a CBM 64. It allows CBM 64 files to be transferred from a CBM 64 disk drive to an Amiga. It's possible to get CBM BASIC programs running in Amiga BASIC but it's best used with ASCII files. Many business programs save data in ASCII format. So you can import your data from a CBM 64 program into a faster running Amiga program with no problems.

AMIGA

DISK DOCTOR UTILITIES
Kingsway Computer Services: Disk APDL 8

The TGM Amiga seems to gobble up disks at an alarming rate. Thanks to this disk a lot of lost data, such as graphic screens, has been recovered. This disk contains several programs to recover data from damaged floppy or hard disks. However, a second drive is normally needed to complete the process. Several of the utilities also recover deleted files provided that the space on the disk which they occupied hasn't been written over by fresh data.

BUSINESS ACCESSORIES
Kingsway Computer Services: Disk APDL 32

If your word processor doesn't include a spell checker then this disk makes a good buy. It runs from the Amiga CLI and spell checks documents from most word processors. Mismatched words can be replaced with the correct spelling, ignored or added to the dictionary.

The disk also includes several personal organiser-type programs for storing addresses and such like, complete with mail-merge facilities. And if you live your life in front of your Amiga a NAG facility provides appointment/birthday reminders at specific dates. The NAG program can be programmed to display a particular message or play an IFF sound sample.

IBM PC

GALAXY WORD PROCESSOR
Kingsway Computer Services: Disk WP3

Version 2.4 of a popular PC word processor. If you've ever used WordStar (one of the top PC word processing packages) then using Galaxy is simple. It features WordStar style key combinations and can even accept documents from WordStar.

Despite being a public domain program it is actually quite complex. There's the usually word search/replace, block cut/paste options and other such goodies. Several documents can be edited/compared at the same time and a fully featured spell checker is also included. If need a word processor give this package some serious consideration.

PC-FILE PLUS
Kingsway Computer Services: Disk DB3

An excellent shareware database program, it's capable of storing up to 65,533 records. An onscreen help facility and tutor mode rapidly solves any problems.

One of its more novel features is soundex retrieval. On most databases when you're searching for a particular record you have to input the exact spelling of the word(s) you're searching for. Soundex allows you to input an approximation of the spelling — useful if you can't remember the exact entry.

The program also includes macros (frequently used sets of commands can be assigned to a particular key or key combinations) and graphs.

The disks mentioned here represent just a tiny sample of what's available from public domain libraries. For a complete list of what's available send an SAE to the public domain libraries listed at the end of the article. In the meantime here's few tasters of what to expect.

ATARI ST
Neochrome, an excellent first art package; CP/M Emulator, run CP/M programs on your ST; 32 Track MIDI sequencer, a low-cost alternative to all those expensive MIDI programs; Virus killer, kill those data destroying viruses; FORTH, a programming language.

AMIGA
CLI Enhancers, makes using the command line editor much easier; AMIC PD TERM, a fully functioning communications program supporting baud rates of 300 to 19200; DMCS Songs, song files created for use with Electronic Arts' Deluxe Music Construction Set; Assembler/Disassembler, great for anyone wishing to learn assembler language, complete with demos.

IBM PC
Spell Checker, accepts files from any ASCII format document; PC-CALC, a spreadsheet program; Survey Soft, a package specially designed for surveyors; Origami, shows the necessary folds to make a variety of objects.
And, of course, there's hundreds of music and graphics demos available for each computer.

MSX
Owners of the MSX can also get their hands on public domain software from MSX Pubic Domain Software. For a catalogue of available titles send an SAE to:
MSX Public Domain Software, 396 Park Lane, Maghull, Merseyside L31 1HQ.

CONTACTS

Goodman Enterprises:
16 Conrad Close, Meir Hay Estate, Longton, Stoke-on-Trent ST3 1SW. Tel: (0782) 335650.

Kingsway Computer Services: 140 Rushdale Road, Sheffield S8 9QE. Tel (0742) 588429.

Riverdene PDL:
63 Wintringham Way, Purley on Thames, Reading, Berkshire RG8 8BH. Tel: (0734) 428492.

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A special KCS switching technique allows a program to be stored completely outside the memory of your Commodore 64/128. Using this system KCS developed the POWER CARTRIDGE. The 16K Cartridge, 100% machine code, gives the user an ideal extension to his normal computer.

POWER TOOLKIT

A powerful BASIC-Toolkit (Additional helpful commands) that considerably simplifies programming and debugging.

AUTO	HARDCAT	RENUMBER
AUDIO	HARDCOPY	REPEAT
COLOR	HEX$	SAFE
DEEK	INFO	TRACE
DELETE	KEY	UNNEW
DOKE	PAUSE	QUIT
DUMP	PLIST	MONITOR
FIND	ILOAD	BLOAD

RENUMBER : *Also modifies all the GOTO's GOSUB's etc. Allows part of a program to be renumbered or displaced.*
PSET : *Set up of printer type.*
HARDCAT : *Prints out Directory.*

The toolkit commands can be used in your programs.

DISK TOOL

Using POWER CARTRIDGE you can load up to 6 times faster from disk.
The Disk commands can be used in your own programs.

DLOAD	DVERIFY	DIR
DSAVE	MERGE	DEVICE
DISK		

MERGE : *Two BASIC programs can be merged into one.*
DISK : *With DISK you can send commands directly to your disk.*

TAPE TOOL

Using POWER CARTRIDGE you can work up to 10 times faster with your data recorder. The Tape commands can be used in your own programs.

LOAD	SAVE	VERIFY
MERGE	AUDIO	

POWERMON

A powerful machine language monitor that is readily available and leaves all of your Commodore memory available for programming.
Also works in BASIC-ROM, KERNAL and I/O areas.

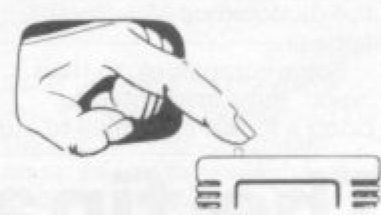
A ASSEMBLE	I INTERPRET	S SAVE
C COMPARE	J JUMP	T TRANSFER
D DIS-ASSEMBLE	L LOAD	V VERIFY
F FILL	M MEMORY	W WALK
G GO	P PRINT	X EXIT
H HUNT	R REGISTER	$ DIRECTORY
		DOS Commands

PRINTERTOOL

The POWER CARTRIDGE contains a very effective Printer-Interface, that self detects if a printer is connected to the Serial Bus or User-Port.
It will print all Commodore characters on Epson and compatible printers.
The printer-interface has a variety of set-up possibilities. It can produce HARDCOPY of screens not only on Serial printers (MPS801, 802, 803 etc) but also on Centronic printers (EPSON, STAR, CITIZEN, PANASONIC, etc).
The HARDCOPY function automatically distinguishes between HIRES and LORES. Multi-colour graphics are converted into shades of grey. The PSET functions allow you to decide on Large/Small and Normal/Inverse printing.
The printer PSET functions are:

- PSET 0 - *Self detection Serial/Centronics.*
- PSET 1 - *EPSON mode only.*
- PSET 2 - *SMITH-CORONA mode only.*
- PSET 3 - *Turns the printing 90 degrees!!*
- PSET 4 - *HARDCOPY setting for MPS802/1526.*
- PSET B - *Bit-image mode.*
- PSET C - *Setting Lower/Upper case and sending Control Codes.*
- PSET T - *All characters are printed in an unmodified state.*
- PSET U - *Runs a Serial printer and leaves the User-port available.*
- PSET Sx - *Sets the Secondary address for HARDCOPY with Serial Bus.*
- PSET L1 - *Adds a line-feed, CHR$ (10), after every line.*
- PSET L0 - *Switches PSET L1 off.*

POWER RESET



On the back of the POWER CARTRIDGE there is a Reset Button. Pressing this button makes a SPECIAL MENU appear on the screen.
This function will work with any programme.

- CONTINUE - *Allows you to return to your program.*
- BASIC - *Return to BASIC.*
- RESET - *Normal RESET.*
- TOTAL BACKUP DISK - *Saves the contents of the memory onto a Disk. The program can be reloaded later with BLOAD followed by CONTINUE.*
- RESET ALL - *RESET of any program.*
- TOTAL BACKUP TAPE - *As BACKUP DISK but to TAPE.*
- HARDCOPY - *At any moment, prints out a Hardcopy of the screen. Using CONTINUE afterwards you can return to the program.*
- MONITOR - *Takes you into the Machine language Monitor.*

... it's dynamite!

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READERPAGE



'Humour seems to be a word that has been strangely omitted fromthe dictionaries of software houses.'

...exclaims **A Forster from Warrington**, winner of this month's £50-worth of software. But there are some humourous games around,aren't there? It's just a case of looking in the right place.

It's a funny old game

Dear TGM
Q: When was the last time you laughed at a computer game that was not an adventure?
A: Erm... I can't quite rmember!

Actually, I suspect that quite a lot of punters out there *have* laughed at their latest piece of software, though not at the humour held within, but with utter despair at therealisation that they have just spent up to 30 quid on thebiggest turkey since Plan 9 From Outer Space. Humour seems to be a word that has been strangely omitted from the dictionaries of software houses.

Some companies, to their credit, have attempted to bring a flicker of a smile to our faces. However, whenever humour tries to raise its ugly little head within a game, a tiny, not veryimportant at all, thing called gameplay goes out faster than the England batting order. Spitting Image and I, Ludicrus spring to mind. There is the odd exception to the rule such as Typhoon Thompson. A couple of neat little graphic routines can work wonders, without the sacrifice of the whole game.

I do admit that I have probably missed some games that produced a couple of chuckles. However, I do read the reviews and I can't remember the last time I read a review that said something along the lines of: 'I laughed my Buster Gonads off at that one.'

I'm not saying every piece of software should be funny (though at £20-£25 a throw someone's laughing somewhere). I'm just saying some software, other than adventure games, could be funny and bea good game as well.

So come on software houses, adventure players aren't the only ones with a sense of humour.
Lighten up!!

A Forster, Warrington WA1 3ET.

Games writing is a serious business to the software houses, but, even so, they've a responsibility to bring a smile to our faces —after all, they're supposed to be entertaining us! Ifyou want some really funny games, we recommend Rick Dangerous, Dynamic Dux, New Zealand Story and (especially) Fiendish Freddy's Big Top O' Fun.

But, until then, here's a joke... Robin Hogg playing Kick Off. Hah, hah.



The final word

Dear TGM
I've always thought that males were attracted to females, surely it's natural to pay attention to a member of the opposite sex you find attractive.

When Mr Average is looking through the software and spots Maria Whittaker wearing a pair of saucers and a very small piece of chain mail, it's not surprising that the box gets a second look. But why do these dogooders want to make the models jobless? After all, nothing is more natural than the human body and I don't hear Boots crying out to ban Mr Barbarian or Targhan who reveal just as much as Maria Whittaker or Miss Russell. Who are these people and why are they not offended by nearnaked man? Surely a game shouldn't get withdrawn. Newspapers like the Sun show more offensive material readily available to anyone. But no-one can censor such newspapers.

Games packaging is only a marketing ploy, if our consumer wants scantily (un)dressed 'ladies' he should get himself a subscription with a different magazine. Mrs Average is also attracted to Michael J Fox or George Michael, it's simply a question of human nature.

If you want a good game you read magazines for recommendations, if you want a poster of a sex symbol then buy one, don't be fooled by games packaging. It's not worth it for a potentially naff game, and £9.95 is a bit steep for a poster!
Until next issue.
R Hunt, Gretton NN17 3BN.
PS: Are there plans for an Elite 2?

Okay, I think that just above covers the sexism/censorship debate— till the next controversial game. Mr Hunt is quite right. If you want porn buy a porn magazine (err, over 18s only). If you want a good game then buy a recommended game. Simple. In a perfect world we wouldn't have advertising agencies, but then who wants to be perfect?

As for Elite 2, David Braben is said to be working on it as we speak. Apparently, it's planned for next Christmas.

Protect the young!

Dear TGM
Recently, the software market has been flooded with a deluge of film tie-ins, of which most are based on 18-certificate films. The most recent titles that spring to mind are The Running Man, Red Heat and RoboCop which are all films of a violent nature. All three titles made average to excellent games, but it is not the games that I'm really concerned with. My real concern lies with the often unscrupulous film companies who are eager to have a film of theirs licensed only to gain extra publicity for the film without actually worrying about the final product (take Back tothe Future and Cobra as cases in fact). Some film companies, however, do worry about the quality of a film tie-in as obviously it places their film in a better light if the game is good. Ocean for example, win many film licences due to their

high standard of recent film tie-ins.

Are the film companies really just concerned with their film-making a great game or are they really anxious to award a licence so that their product may reach an audience of under-18s whichwill hopefully encourage ticket sales and video rentals? My opinion strongly lies with the latter. And, of late, most games are being released to coincide with the video release.

One should point out, though, that the most likely reason for the game emerging at the time of the video release is so that the film company can make a lot of money on video rentals from a previously untapped source. In this case the source is found in computer-using adolescents who can quite easily obtain an 18 certificate video through an older friend, an older member of their family or simply through their friendly local video dealer—cinemas tend to be more stringent. If one thinks of all tie-ins, one begins to think that the film companies deliberately set out to exploit software-buying teenagers with their demands for 'Rent the video' messages to be slapped on adverts and packaging.

Take RoboCop, for instance. The licence was obtained at the time of the cinema release and Ocean first promoted their licence at the PCW Show, where thousands of teenagers would have seen clips from the film. The cinema release came and went. Then the eye-catching full-page ads appeared bearing the 'Rent the video' messages. Virgin Vision released RoboCop on video in November last year and in their pre-release pamphlet for dealers they referred to their tie-in with Ocean as a 'RoboCoup'. The pamphlet also states that the 'rent the video messages' placed on adverts and packaging would reach upwards of 'Two million computer addicts'. This rather patronising statement shows just how much the film companies actually know about this new market they have found and wish to benefit from. In simple terms, to make more money they want to exploit teenagers to rent a video that they aren't supposed to by law, and to do this they are willing to use the computer industry to reach us.

I have nothing against film licences in general (even though it may sound like it!), but the kind of exploitation shown by the RoboCop campaign and others like it is a little too much to accept.

Ismail Valimahomed, New Malden KT3 5NF

Interesting point. As the average age of the TGM readership is 19, the promotion of games such as RoboCop in the mag doesn't really concern us. However, even we have problems when giving away videos in competitions which can only be viewed by over 18s— we just have to trust the readership into giving their real age.

Sadly, though, such exploitation is not new. I remember when there was a discussion about toy shops stocking models of Starsky and Hutch (those were the days!) cars when the programme itself contained large amounts of violence and was even broadcast after the 9.00pm watershed. How would children of six years and up know about such programmes unless they had seen them?

Good ol' Mr Holloway!

Dear TGM
On the subject of the Konix Multisystem, I hope it is a big-success, and has every opportunity to become the biggest thing since the Spectrum. It has amazing hardware and control capabilities, I only hope software houses will use them, rather than converting ST/Amiga or 8-bit releases. I am considering buying one as it offers superlative features at a reasonable price, and very importantly THE GAMES ARE CHEAP. The reason why more people have not upgraded to a 16-bit is because the prospect of paying £20-30 for a game does not appeal. The £15 price of games is what will help make the machine a success. The imaginative peripherals, hydraulic chair, etc, are also another big point in its favour. And to all the critics who like to knock it and say the machine will never appear, they should at least be glad someone's trying something genuinely innovative and exciting for a change — and for once it's not the Japanese (not that I have anything against the Japanese). I can give nothing but praise to Konix for this project (you can send the cheque later, Mr Holloway).

As for whining MSX owners, they all (both of them) seem to spend most of their time writing letters, probably because they can't get any decent games to play. The MSX may be a good computer to own in other countries, but over here it wasn't a success, so don't expect us all to sell our STs and Speccies and rush out and buy them. As for TGM covering it more, it does cover it; it's just there aren't many games released, so it can't review masses of them. Anyway, if the machine is so brilliant, why are many MSX owners scared to reveal their names? Thank goodness the ST/Amiga war is over (in TGM anyway), I look forward to the forthcoming Multisystem/PC Engine/Mega Drive debate (all right then, argument).

Martin Williams, Melksham SN12 7BU.

After previewing the first Konix game, Hammerfist, this month, we'll be looking at the system itself next month — can't wait! As to the impending debate on consoles, TGM have seen all of them and even we can't decide which is the best — they are all so similar (and good). Although, when Konix gets the software support it may be a different kettle of consoles.

Redefining 'finished'

Dear TGM
Since I started collecting TGM (Issue 12), I have seen the mag undergo several changes. Recently I feel that you have been paying too much attention to the Back Bytes/Centre Bytes sectionwhilst neglecting what should be the main content of The Games Machine — GAMES. I am in no way criticising the aforementioned features, on the contrary, the information contained in the BackBytes sections convinced me to purchase an Amiga, but your news'n' previews, reviews and coin-op sections are well below the standard of many of the other major computer magazines. For example: Black Tiger, The New Zealand Story and Shinobi? Black Tiger was reviewed in C+VG two months ago!

Raheil 'Where are the games?' Mehdi, Middlesbrough TS5 7QH.

People seem to forget that summertime is notorious for the few games being released — we can only review what's finished! And subsequently we had a lot of 'dead space', which we decided to fill with so-called 'techy' material. When you spend £400 on a computer, surely you want to use it for more than just games! Anyway, that's our feeling.
On the subject of Black Tiger, US Gold informed us that they did not want a review going in TGM yet because the game wasn't going to be released till the end of 1990 — fair comment. I seem to remember that EMAP's The One also had a similar situation to C+VG, when they reviewed Federation of Free Traders many months before it was released — then giving it a great review on the ST, when months later (still before it was released) we received our'finished' version to find it bugridden and unplayable (thankfully, Gremlin rectified this on the Amiga). When we received The New Zealand Story from Ocean we were informed that TGM was the FIRST magazine to receive a completely finished game. However, we'd already seen reviews in other magazines! In the first years of reviewing, a finished game was one that arrived in finished packaging. Then software houses started producing 'pre-production' copies (just copies of the master tape, often without instructions!) — the new 'finished' game. Software houses then started to send out 99%-completed games, then 'well, there's only the sound to go

Help!

Dear TGM
My colleague and I are both keen computer enthusiasts. We enjoy playing arcade and computer games and would like to progress astep further and enter the world of programming.

Due to lack of knowledge in this sphere, we ask for your advice. Obviously the game standards we would like to achieve in the near future are on a parallel to Armalyte and Last Ninja 2.

We would be most grateful for your help.

Brian Jackson & Jason Wingrove, London N16 6QE.

First thing to do is to learn machine code and write a completed game. Next thing is to sort out the copyright, by sending a copy of the game to yourself under recorded delivery. Final thing is to send copies off to software houses of your choice. Take a look at their present range to see if your game is suitable. And then just wait.



in,' etc. As the magazine market got more competitive, so the editors' ideals changed. (Editors often allowed reviews of — unfinished — games just to beat the competition. Of course, software houses demanded favourable reviews or the mag wasn't allowed to review the partly finished product.) Nowadays, there's no guarantee that any review you see in any magazine will be of a completely, ready for packaging, finished game (software houses often change a gamewithout telling a magazine, that has, in good faith, reviewed a finished game). The only thing that you can tell by looking at when each magazine reviews a game is each editor's and soft warehouse's definition of 'finished'.

Help !!!

Dear TGM
Help me! I am so confused! I've been reading a warning from NEC who say not to buy a PC Engine from any mail order companies because they have been altered to suit British televisions. They also go on to say that if the Engine becomes faulty they will not repair it. But if the mail order firm won't fix it either, I'll be stuck with a worthless piece of junk which can only be thrown away (sob!). Please, TGM, can you help me! If the Engine is designed for use with a monitor, has it been altered? If not, then does that mean NEC will repair it if it breaks? And, should I get an Engine from a mail order firm for use with a TV anyway?
Charlie Dolan, Weymouth DT4 7LD.

NEC (UK) are saying that they will not repair any machines that are grey imports (which all UK ones are). Fair comment seeing as they aren't officially selling them in the UK. However, some mail order companies DO offer an Engine repair service (usually undertheir own one year guarantee).
Scart (or monitor) versions of the PC Engine shouldn't have been altered inside, and, therefore, should have a slighter chance of becoming faulty. We've PAL TV and Scart versions (from MicroMedia) in the office and haven't had any problems with either (so far). Although, we have had a few readers ringing up and complaining that PC Engines they've bought (which have been altered inside by some dealers — shhh... you know who) for use with PAL have blown up or the graphics have become purple and distorted!
Other dealers have a PAL TV converter plugged on the back (ie, not altering the Engine itself), these are much more reliable. Our advice is to ring the dealer direct (or even pick one up from major retailers and independents in the high street) and check on whether it's been altered.

UNCLE MEL'S TRIVIA QUIZ

1) How many pins are there on a standard Euroconnector computer expansion port?
2) What does the word ATARI mean?
3) The Amiga version of US Gold's Skweek was pulled due to 'unauthorised adulterated versions slipping through the net'. Who was really responsible for the obscenities in the speech bubbles?
4) What is topically trendy about the VDU screen cleaner known as Clens?
5) Where did Domark's globetrotting Dominic Wheatley go for his summer hols this year: a) Bankok, b) Monte Carlo, c) Ludlow?
6) What is the correct spelling for the BSB square aerialsatellite receiver?
7) Virgin has licensed Monty Python. Name all the original Python team.
8) Find the software houses in these bizarre items of clothing: SQUID HAT, SIK SLAX, I ARSER.
9) On which other cartoon series was the futuristic hi-tech Jetsons based?
10) What event did the Zenith PC corporation sponsor in Miami, Florida: a) the Tipp-Ex leech wrestling finals, b) a soccer match between the English and Argentinian league champs, c) MSX baiting?
11) Which word triggered the virus in the GCHQ word processing system?
12) What's the difference between satellite television and acupuncture?
13) Give or take five years either way, when was IBM founded?
14) In the recent Mandarin Software survey, office managers put computer gaming top of the list for relieving stress. What activity came bottom of the heap?
15) Fill in the missing numbers: '194_', 'MIG_ _', '_D Pool'.
16) Who were these SF heroes: Thomas Jerome Newton, Steve Austin, Alex Rogan, Bruce Wayne?
17) Name the designer of Tetris?
18) What business was Code Masters' Jim Darling in before computer games: a) chicken plucking, b) contact lenses, c) astrophysics?
19) True or false. The original title of the 1965 sci-fi classic Alphaville was Tarzan Versus IBM.
20) Which song title did Tina Turner lift from the original Apple Macintosh manual?

ANSWERS

1) 64 (unless it's the Channel Tunnel, which nobody gives two pins about).
2) KINDLY BEWARE, in Japanese.
3) That *******, *******, **** of a programmer.
4) It's ozone-friendly, biodegradable, non-flammable and non-solvent based. Vote Green, you know it makes sense.
5) Ludlow, so there!
6) D.I.S.A.S.T.E.R.
7) Graham Chapman, John Cleese, Terry Gilliam, Eric Idle, Terry Jones, Michael Palin.
8) Hit Squad, Klassix, Sierra.
9) The Flintstones.
10) B, Arsenal v Independiente.
11) Thatcher.
12) There aren't so many pricks involved with acupuncture.
13) 1914.
14) Sex.
15) 2, 29, 3.
16) The Man Who Fell to Earth, The Six Million Dollar Man, TheLast Starfighter, Batman.
17) Alexei Pazhitnov.
18) B, contact lenses.
19) True (Tarzan lost).
20) What You See Is What You Get.

COMPETITION RESULTS

I'M BACK FOR MY HAT

US Gold (Issue 21)

Richard Lamb of Sutton answered the three Indiana Jones questions correctly and receives the complete Indy kit (Indy Fedora hat, whip, jacket, sweatshirt, game and poster).

50 extremely fortunate runners-up each receive a copy of the Action Game and a Last Crusade film novel. The chosen few are...

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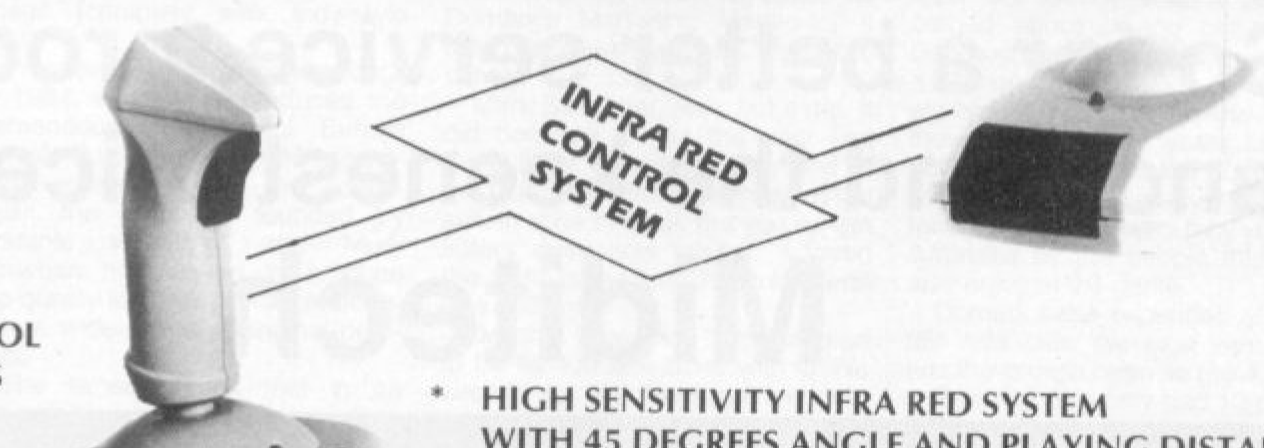
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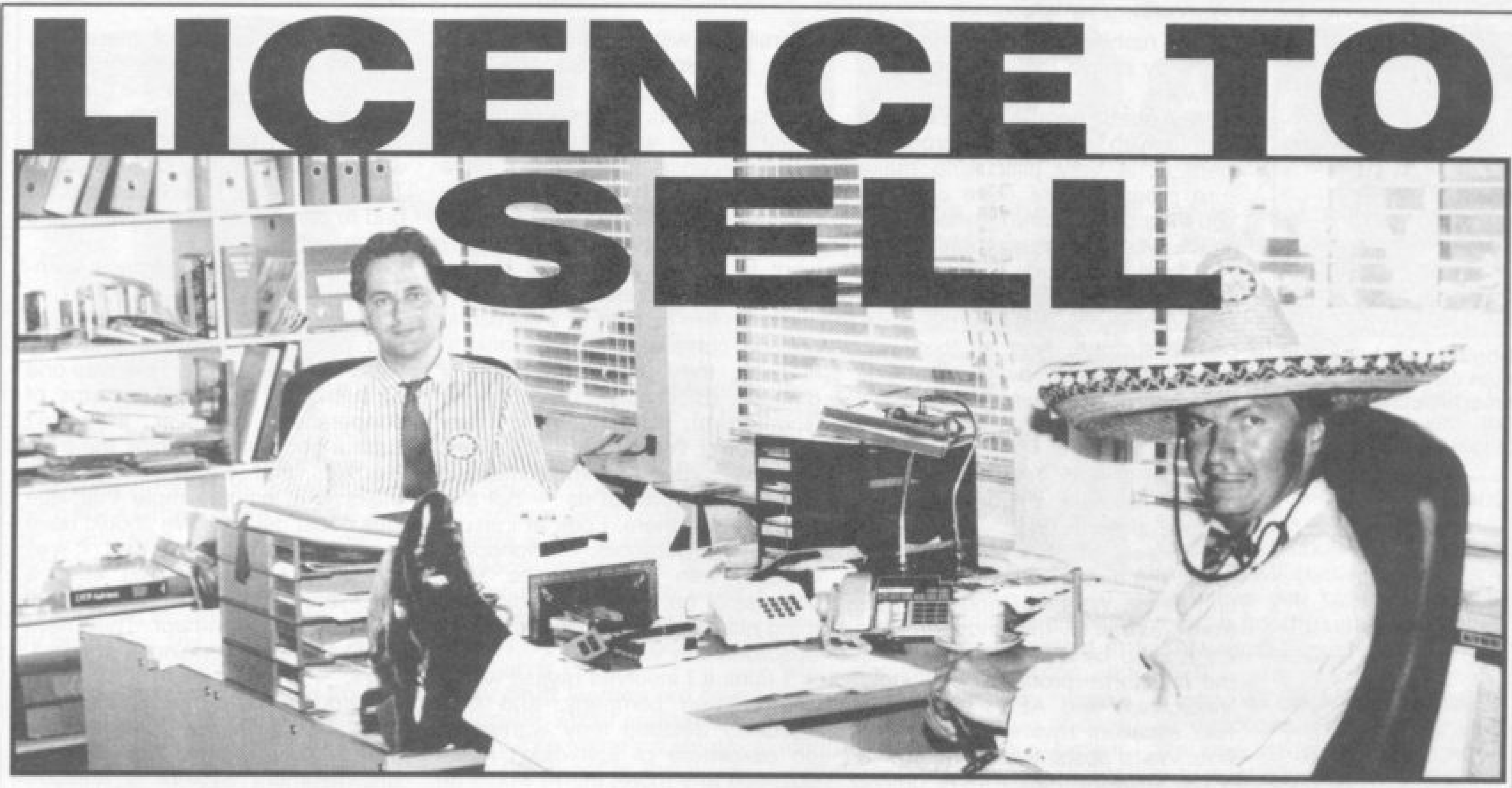
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LICENCE TO SELL



Over the past year Domark have grown not only in size but also in stature. With the latest Bond game, Licence to Kill, selling more than any other, Dominic Handy braved London traffic to talk to its publishers

As the traffic slithered its way through old London town, I sat thinking about Domark's history. The producers of Xybots, APB, Typhoon Thompson and Licence to Kill. But hang on a minute. Aren't these the same people that were just a few years ago producing A View to a Kill, Eureka and Friday the 13th? Surely not.

Luckily for Domark, and unlike some other top producers, their quality of product has increased at the same rate as their quantity. And now they're producing around three new products each month, and receiving great reviews and sales which reflect the company's new image (complete with Indy-style logo).

From small beginnings way back in 1984, when they produced the tremendously successful Eureka (mainly due to the £25,000 competition connected with the adventure), the company founded by Dominic Wheatley and Mark Strachan has vowed to produce top-quality licensed software alongside a wide range of original products.

The twosome first met in an advertising agency where they worked as account managers. Computers entered their lives when they had an idea to attract a client for advertising purposes — it was Commodore.

"We only had 12 people last year, now we've 20"

They approached Commodore with an idea to write an adventure game in which you would find a telephone number which could win you a cash prize. 'A sort of Golden Hare idea,' says Wheatley. Commodore would then bundle the cassette with each computer. They didn't actually think the idea would make *themselves* any money. Then, in the immortal words of Archimedes, Eureka, their first game was published. Ironically, just a few years later, Domark themselves were producing games to be bundled for Commodore.

Just as the interview was about to commence in came an ecstatic Mark Strachan waving a fax with their latest order from Germany. Although James Bond may seem a British phenomenon, the German ship-out for Licence to Kill was a whopping 5,000 units of the game.

But how about the dreadful View to a Kill? Surely not as impressive a start, especially with all those scathing reviews from members of the press. (Not least from a certain erstwhile journalist by the name of Clare Edgeley, who now works as Domark's Marketing Manager.) It didn't go down well with the public either.

Mark Strachan: 'Ahh, but it did. It did because it was the very first Bond tie-in. It was probably one of the first major movie licences. It did sell, in spite of itself. But you do get letters even now saying, 'I loved the third game but the first game was brilliant'.'

Dominic Wheatley: 'We also tried to be far too ambitious with it. We wanted to put three games onto one cassette, when we should have just said, 'Do one game well, and don't try and be too clever about it.' We tried to do an almost compilation-value-for-money. We were told it was possible to do three [different] games with one programming team. We still know very little about the intricacies of software — then, we knew even less — and it was almost as if, 'Well, if you say it's possible, how much money do you want?' And that was how it was. Today we'd be a bit more cautious.'

Mark: 'Living Daylights was a better game. However, the problem with that one was the first level — it was very difficult. But with Licence to Kill we have professional people to evaluate all the product immediately.'

I wondered if the enthusing pair had ever secretly waited at the end of their phonelines for that call from Bond producer, Albert 'Cubby' Broccoli?

Dominic: 'Oh, of course. Well Mark has been doing screentests non-stop.'

Mark: 'But like Steve Ovett recently, I turned down many offers because they wouldn't offer us the same deal. Because if either of us was to become James Bond the other would have to be there as well. But Cubby was a bit concerned about having two James Bonds onscreen at once.

'Seriously, though, they're extremely nice people. And I think they have over the years become quite surprised with the success of software. There's always been the record to the film, and they've been surprised by the people that have also enjoyed the game.'

Domark have expanded at a terrific rate over the past year. Why has the growth been so rapid?

Dominic: 'We only had 12 people last year, now we've 20. That reflects the increase in the amount of products we're handling.

'We've got things like Licence to Kill, Pictionary, and the Star Wars trilogy coming out at Christmas. ['Three games in a MEGAVALUE pack,' Mark interjects.] But with the Broderbund and Tengen stuff we've two American partners who are feeding us with a lot of material, which requires more personnel to handle it.

'Mark: 'Your readers may wonder — as I did when I came into business — why there are so many




Dominic explains that man cannot live on arcade licences alone

people rushing around doing what is a fairly simple thing — producing software.

'We need people — excellent people — to look after the programmers. It is very difficult to make sure programs are done on time. You then need somebody to tell the media when things are coming out. We need somebody to make sure the boxes are on time, with the printed material, and that the duplication is done. And all this, with more and more products, takes people. We even have four people making sure that retailers pay us on time and that our invoices go out — all this adds up.

'And now we've got somebody (who's also a programmer) who supervises the software department, the quality of software is getting better. We had Randy Browlite from Tengen in this morning, and it's nice to be able to tell him that the first three products — Xybots, Vindicators and APB — have all had excellent reviews from everyone. We're absolutely delighted!'

Dominic: 'And also we're getting some good programming teams. Take Consult [Return of the Jedi], they did a very nice conversion for us so we gave them Vindicators and they've just finished Dragon Spirit. It's nice to start getting long-term relationships with these people. You can rely upon them, and they can rely upon you — and that's really where we're trying to head.'

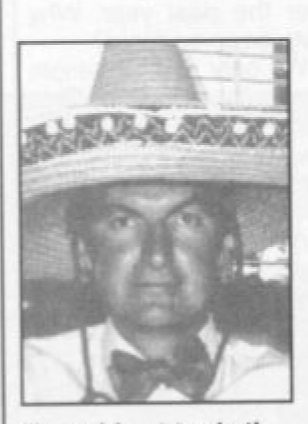
"Okay so the kids will go and buy Hard Drivin', but the parents will buy Pictionary"

With all the Star Wars games now converted (until Lucas starts filming again in 1992) it may seem to the British public that Domark's job is now over. However, Star Wars has only just been released in the States, and the trilogy comes out on compilation this Christmas. So how are the Americans taking to a British company producing the computer versions of *their* coin-ops?

Mark: 'Broderbund are selling Star Wars [in America] and have done a very good job. They had a little box with a sound chip on it which played the Star Wars theme when you pressed it. It's sold extremely well, and we're hoping they'll do the other two as well.

'Two years ago we did Star Wars, the following Easter we did Empire, last Christmas we did Jedi. Now we starved everybody, and we're going to come out with a compilation.'

Dominic: 'It'll be a whole year after Jedi. I think that's a very determined policy we've got. Not to let any product go out under compilation until *at least* 12 months after its initial release. I think there are certain companies who people began to realise would, if they just hung on a bit, release the same game on compilation. I think one or two have learned from that, and it doesn't happen so much now.'


"I would not trade the enjoyment for millions of dollars," says Mark

Not only have Domark expanded over the past year, they've also diversified, with such games as Bob's Full House, Pictionary, Hard Drivin', James Bond, Star Wars... the list goes on. Why so many different titles, when the Tengen arcade licence itself would have provided enough product for any normal independent company?

Dominic: 'First of all you don't want to put all your eggs in one basket. It would be wrong to rely solely on film tie-ups, or a particular coin-op company... If you look at Macsen, they were only into TV games (Blockbusters, Bullseye, Countdown). Unfortunately, they went down. We picked that up as it fell and turned it into something which was a part of us — not that we relied on them. Look at Leisure Genius (Scrabble, Monopoly, Cluedo) with board games. Very successful but they never did anything else and eventually had to be absorbed into Virgin.

'I think if I involved myself with a one coin-op company, and they suddenly decided they wanted to go elsewhere or just didn't make coin-ops any more, then I would be very exposed.'

But why Trivial Pursuit? A very strange licence, even by Domark's own diverse standards.

Dominic: 'Well, it's the one that got away as far as Leisure Genius were concerned. And the sales for it were terrific. It's now on eight formats, and it *still* sells. And this Christmas it will sell another 25,000, quite happily — just like the boardgame. Leisure Genius thought about it but didn't really pursue it, although it would have been perfect for their range.

'With Pictionary we think we've got a good game there — although, obviously, it won't sell as many as Trivial Pursuit [which has sold over 500,000 units]. And Pictionary uses the computer much more than Trivial Pursuit.

'Okay so the kids will go and buy Hard Drivin', but the parents will buy Pictionary. I'm sure that no 14-year-old bought Trivial Pursuit. It was very much geared to getting everybody in front of the computer, as a family.'

Still with strange games, there was Split Personalities (originally titled Splitting Images), the novel slide-picture-puzzle game. That must have been a real seller!

Dominic: 'Unfortunately that got a lot of very good reviews, but it didn't do that well. I made more money when I gave it to Elite to put on a compilation. And that's the secret of a good compilation. You put games on it that were very well received but nobody ever really bought. Why would you want to buy a compilation with five great games, four of which you already had?

'Split Personalities just arrived on the desk one day. It was actually dinosaurs, and we didn't like that very much, so we got them to change the backgrounds. We wanted something to make it interesting, and we thought of Spitting Image. We tried to speak to the Spitting Image people and they weren't interested in computer games. So we said, all right, and did it anyway. Then they wrote us a letter and we had to can it and then repackage it which lost a lot of sales.'

But you got Spitting Image eventually.

'Oh, yes. We went back to them two years later and this time they were more receptive. That was one of our better licences in terms of cooperation. However it wasn't such a good game. I think the trouble was that we were trying to make it a simple-simple that little kids could get into. We should have made it a lot more involved. It was too easy. I was shocked when a nine-year-old I know played right through in half-an-hour. They want much more challenging stuff nowadays.'

Through the recent Broderbund deal, Domark have really hit the States with a storm. The Nintendo Entertainment System is massive in America, ever thought of console software?

Mark: 'Mmmm... That's a difficult one. The simple answer is that we are not really that keen on getting burdened with the restrictions that would be put upon us by Nintendo. We would prefer to operate a medium-sized company that is totally free, and a publisher in the true sense, rather than a box-shifter of Nintendo cartridges and where we really sign away our independence. At this time we're not desperately keen. Things may change.'

Dominic: 'Yes, you can make enormous amounts of money from it, but for how long and at what price for yourself and your company? You can make easy money if you're prepared to sit back and lose your independence.'

Mark: 'Everybody in this company produces software and makes a good living. We don't make millions and millions. We make a good living and we enjoy what we're doing. I would not trade the enjoyment for millions of dollars. I don't want, necessarily, to have a palace and five yachts and not enjoy myself.

'My gut feeling about consoles in this country is that they will do well, but not as well as they expect to do. However, I still think, for many reasons, that the European, especially the UK, customer is somewhat different from the American or Japanese customer. They still require more than just a games machine to get them to part with their cash.'

And ambitions for 1990? When the drinks are flowing on New Year's Eve what will Do and Mark be hoping for?

Dominic: 'To be in the top five software houses.'

Mark: 'To win the world croquet championship.'

Fine... ■

PBM UPDATE

The one and only John Woods grabs a book of stamps and checks out the latest PBM games

One of the most interesting sports games to start recently is The Betting Game, first release from **Mike Gibbard**. It's computer moderated and based on National Hunt horse racing. Your aim is to get rich by getting your horses to win key races, or by betting on any of the races in the 26-week season.

The game offers cash and trophy prizes, and is packed with features like injuries, news pages, betting, trainers' reports, sponsorship, etc. Start-up including first turn is £3, with further turns being just £1.50.

The largest UK PBM company is **KJC Games**, and they now have a line up of seven games. One of the most amusing is Trolls Bottom — a strange lost island of magic and mayhem where 70 players each play the role of an enormous troll! Exploring the island you encounter all kinds of weird and wonderful creatures, as you battle it out to become number one troll. Turn replies are written in a comical style, which will have you rolling about in laughter. Starter package is FREE, and further turns can be £1 or £1.50 depending on options used.

Epic proportions

Epic is one of the best computer-moderated wargames on the market. There are six position types, six races and ten terrain types. Races are orc, human, elven, dwarven, dark (birdlike humans) and maratasen (lionmen).

The position you play can vary from warlords, who have troop advantages but can't use magic, to wizards who rely heavily on magic. The object of the game is to control the population by attacking provinces, which may be independent (controlled by the computer) or controlled by another player.



Costs vary with the amount done, and can add up. The basic turnsheet is £2, with each subsequent basic turnsheet at £1.50. Special turnsheets (for spying actions etc.) cost 75p, and there's a 15p surcharge for each special action. If you're looking for a wargame to really get your teeth into — this game is not easy — this could be for you. Start-up is £5.

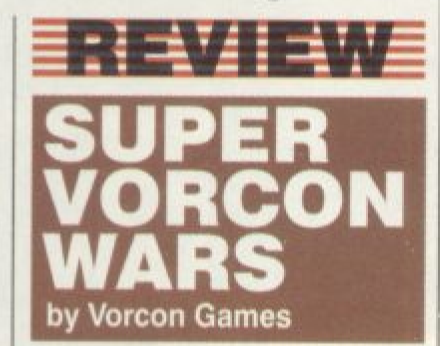
Reality Shift Games are new on the scene with Loremasters of Corlean. The game's a single-character RPG, set in the usual fantasy lands, with a clear rulebook. It seems fairly combat orientated, so is probably more for the D&D hack 'n' slay brigade rather than pure roleplayers. Start-up is £4.50, which includes two free turns. Further turns are £1.60. The first ten TGM readers to apply will get an extra free turn with their start-up!

Taking a leaf

Having given an almighty plug for my own magazine on numerous occasions, I thought it'd be nice to have a look at some of the other PBM magazines around...

Thrust Issue One consists of 24 neatly-produced A5 pages, all for a very reasonable 50p. The artwork is pretty good, and the whole magazine comes over very friendly and readable. Contents include a fair sized news column, with reviews of Timepilot, Crisis, Quest and their own product, Overlord. Contact: Charles Perkins, Whysham House, 169 London Road, Cheltenham GL52 6HN.

Warped Sense of Humour (*WSOH*) Issue Four is a bit more expensive at £1 for 40 not-so-neat pages. The whole fanzine is brimming with enthusiasm, and mainly consists of pretty short reviews. I find *WSOH* lacking in many of my favourite sections — there are no letters, or features on PBM. Nevertheless if it's reviews you're looking for then there really are plenty! Contact: Julie Gilg, 166 Pennsylvania Rd, Exeter, Devon EX4 6DX.



REVIEW

SUPER VORCON WARS

by Vorcon Games

Sixteen players find themselves on the planet Vorcon aiming at total domination. Vorcon is mapped in hexagons, wraps around and is made up of both natural terrain and Vorcon-made areas (the Vorcons being the present inhabitants).

At the game's start you control one commander situated at his base, with 40 men to help him out. There are 26 options available, although you won't be able to do many of them till later in the game. Your men can be ordered to defend an area (hex) or attack new territory. Using the options you can develop areas to produce useful things — such as food!

Weaponry levels can be increased; atomic ore can be used with the necessary research and development to produce the dreaded bomb; areas can be mined to discourage intruders, and mineral resources can be increased. An atomic missile destroys 16 hexes around where it lands, and considering you only start with one hex, it's a pretty fearsome weapon. Some games of Vorcon have ended up as radiation wastelands, with all the players dead!

The turnsheet is headed by a hex map of the 16 hexes around your commander, which uses computer-generated symbols to represent each type of terrain. The remainder of the turnsheet comprises lists of your resources and results of battles and a section to fill inr orders for the next turn to send off.

Orders have to be sent in as number codes, which means looking things up in the rulebook constantly. Also the first few turns are a little boring as it takes five or six turns to meet anyone else. However, as the game progresses and your empire expands so things get more exciting. Players have to negotiate alliances, as well as waging war on possibly more than one border!

The rulebook is attractive, and explains the game very well. GM John Nicholson is a helpful guy and will readily reply to any problems you have. So overall then, a good game which takes a few turns to get going in.

TIPS

Expand as quickly as possible in all directions. Head straight for the nearest player, and when you meet ally with him — a war at this early stage could leave you too far behind the other players. Wherever possible try to get allies to join you in any attacks on other players. Also, try to gain a nuclear missile as soon as possible, and use it to deter. However, try not to be the first to fire one, as there's usually a large response from other players!

Machine rating: 70%



That draws the column to an end for another issue. What would you like to see in the column? Drop me a line: John Woods, PBM Update, TGM, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB.

CONTACTS

MJ Gibbard, Pixies Nest, Wainhill, Chinnor, Oxford OX9 4AB.
KJC Games, PO Box 11, Cleveleys, Blackpool, Lancashire FY5 2UL.
Rhann Postal Games, PO Box 12, Sarisbury Green, Southampton, Hants JSO3 6YL.
Reality Shift Games (TGM), PO Box 37, Exeter, Devon EX2 9XF.
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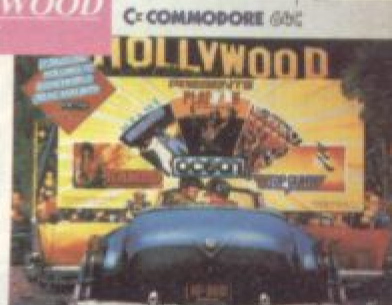
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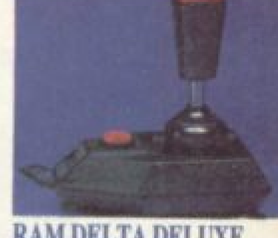
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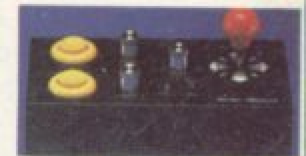
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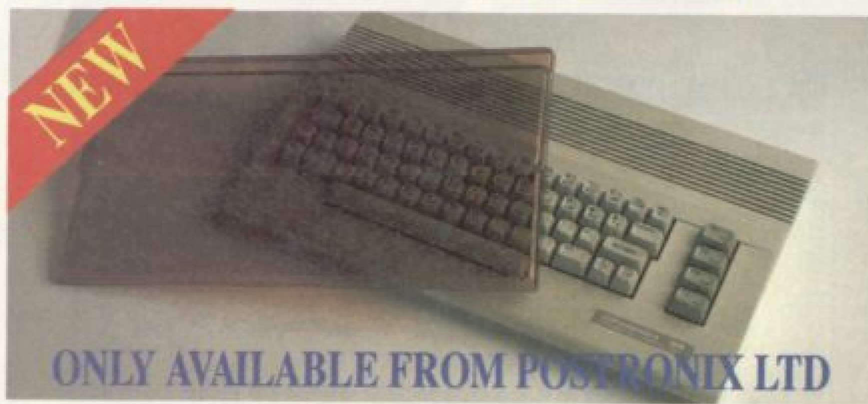
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Dial the TGM Competition line this month and you'll stand a chance of winning some great Code Masters games. Just phone the number, listen to the que tions, and send your answers in to us by August 15. Simple.

Code Masters have just unveiled news of their brand-new 16-bit budget range. Find out more information in this issue's news pages. Thanks to TGM, you could be the first people in Britain playing the new range. We've got ten bundles of two games to give away to owners of Amigas and STs.

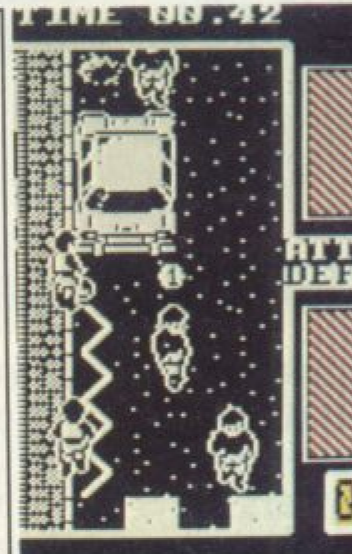
8-bit owners haven't been forgotten either; we've also got TEN packs of TEN Code Masters budget-busting games up for grabs.

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Entries must be in by August 15, and all those interesting and amazing competition rules apply. Good Luck!

CODEMASTERS HOTLINE QUIZ

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News and cheats!

Printed on this page is the number which connects you directly to the TGM Competition Hotline. However, we've also got Hotlines for
all the latest news and playing tips. Written in person by the TGM team (although, some strange bloke reads them out), these lines give all the latest information and cheats/tips on games.

The newsline is written after this issue of TGM has gone to bed, and is therefore the most up-to-date TGM service we have. Grab a piece of the action on

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Industry veteran, Robin Candy, peruses the latest mailbag to help you out on the latest games. You can hear his very personal message on the TGM Tipline

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Recently, there have been many disturbing rumours circulating regarding the closure of Infocom. Paul Rigby, like many adventurers, was distressed to hear such news, and got straight on the phone to their American offices for this exclusive interview (were still there!?)...

The fall and rise of Infocom?

Dramatic news indeed. Well, I am sure that any adventurers who have heard such news are anxious that we might have seen the passing of one of the great legends in interactive fiction. But have we? I talked to Rob Sears, General Manager of Infocom (which just about answers the question already), and started by asking if in fact Infocom had closed its operations.

'You're talking to the General Manager of Infocom [laughing], I'd like to think I'm still working! I'm still getting pay-cheques at the end of the week — somebody is paying a lot of money for nothing!'

I think what Rob is trying to say is that, no, Infocom have not closed its operations. What they have closed are their offices in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and have moved into the Mediagenic buildings on the other side of the continent. Rob continues: 'Infocom was purchased by Activision — which later became Mediagenic — a couple of years ago. Infocom was badly in need of money at that point . Mediagenic really took the company under their wing. For a number of years it has kept up the operation — we have not been profitable in quite a few years. I don't think since the acquisition, as a matter of fact. That is a long time to hold up an operation which is not profitable, particularly in the software industry where the norm is a year to a year and a half. So Mediagenic really stepped out for us.

'The closing was as much a realisation of cost as it was a realisation of what the market situation currently is in the US. It is a very flat market. We are not seeing sales grow in gross dollars at retail. We're finding that the Nintendo are taking a fair amount of the consumer gaming dollar. Infocom, for its part, has made some significant changes in its approach to IF [Interactive Fiction] in this last wave of products, but they are also late coming out. They were all due to ship, initially, last September. We've just released the PC versions of Journey and Shogun in the last couple of days and there's still a couple more to go. So, not only were we not in a strong financial position but we were making it weaker with the fact that we were not able to get the products out as quickly as we would of liked. Often you make a technological leap and sometimes you can't plan exactly when it's going to become available — that's really the trap that Infocom fell into.

'We stripped down a lot of our resources over the last year to try to focus on getting products shipped. Ultimately, Infocom was brought back to the West Coast. Not so much to close down Infocom but to ensure that it survives.

'We are a separate business unit. Nothing has changed in terms of financial and general business practices... The big advantage now is that we are closer to the corporate resources of operations: sales, creative services, testing procedures, etc... But there has been a cost. Roughly half of the staff at the East Coast office were asked to come West. Only five decided to make the trip. All of the Imps [Implementors — Game Designers] were approached to take up an external developer status and develop products for Infocom using ZIL [the

The ADVENTURE STRATEGY ROLEPLAY Column

The introduction of new TGM awards keep Paul Rigby busy this month. While he's still time to take a look at the latest releases and catch up on the news...

I've been picking up news and rumours like the proverbial transistor radio lately. What would you say if I said that **Infocom** was about to produce a game called Body Heat? Lies! Lies! You respond. Well, in a way, you'd be right. The title was about to be launched when, according to Infocom, 'it was shot'. What was it about? Who knows. One for the archives, though.

The final news about Quartermaster, that groundbreaking adventure/RPG from Infocom, is bad I'm afraid. There will be no other versions taken from the

new parser/system Infocom are using which is run on an Apple Mac II, base, UNIX system] or whatever tools they wanted to use and only one of the Imps has decided to, Elizabeth Langesy who's now working on a game.

'Mark Blanc, who did Journey is working on a project now and is getting ready to sign for another one. We were also hoping to set up some of our other designers in a similar mode.'

Those words 'were hoping' do not sound too promising, so has anybody else left in addition to Brian Moriarty (who has designed Loom for Lucasfilm and left Infocom last August)?

'Steve Meretsky and Dave Lebling are doing their own thing right now.'

So has Dave Lebling given up game design completely?

'I have no idea. Yet I don't think Dave has given up games altogether. I suspect that he wants to take a break. He's one of the old men of games. There's not that many of them around. Dave's been in the business a long time.'

So how about Steve Meretsky?

'Steve, I believe, wants to continue writing games, although I'm not sure how he wants to proceed at this point.'

So, Steve was not going to work within the folds of Infocom?

'At least not right now, but that may change, you never know. It's a moving target.'

So, it seems, of the early Infocom staff, Mark Blanc is the sole survivor of the Infocom upheaval. But what happened to Amy Briggs? 'Amy Briggs left us a year to two years ago.'

As far as Rob's concerned Amy has disappeared and has not been heard of since. Plundered Hearts was not well received in the States and I fear that Amy may have taken the lack of success to heart and decided to call it a day. If that is so, it is a great shame and a loss to the adventure world.

Consequently, with the general staff movements away from Infocom a new designer has been taken on. The gentleman's name is Mike Moore. He comes from the tabletop wargame business, specifically SPI and Victory.

Having established Infocom's present position I was intrigued to find out what plans the 'new' Infocom had in the future. Because of the major staff changes, new personalities would surely stamp themselves upon the game design — but we may see the return of Lebling and Meretsky. In addition to the staff changes are changes in perceived public attitude to Infocom. Infocom must gauge the 'will of the people' correctly if it wishes to survive. In an effort to do this, Infocom are turning away from the company who created Zork. I asked Rob Sears what he thought of the Sierra-type animated adventures.

'I think those graphic adventures, as we call them, are interesting, but I think they were more interesting two years ago.'

So what *was* the future for adventure games?

'I don't think it's clear right now. We're waiting to explore technology a bit more. Design has to be pushed more in the next year or two. CD could play a part in it, the PC Engine could play a part in it, 16-bit, Nintendo console, Gameboy — there's so many things. But at this point I think design is going to be the crucial issue. Games need deeper, more intricate design.'

What about any more 'different' adventures from Infocom such as Nord & Bert and Plundered Hearts?

'Perhaps not as obviously different. I think the biggest change you are going to see is some new technology. We will be going outside of just the normal IF, outside of the text-based game. We're going to be exploring new, different directions. Examples such as Quarterstaff and Battletech. There are other environments out there that will be under our scrutiny. Whether it's female orientated or whether it's more of a word game.

'What we are grasping for now is something deeper. More to push this concept of game design to a new level. Which means that it is not just the magic of putting code into the machine, it's also the magic of what code you put where, and when and how does it interact. Focusing more on the experience of the user. Realising that there is a video portion, an audio portion and a tactile portion. This is something new. We didn't have these visual and sound capabilities five years ago. There is a huge growing market out there. People who are playing Nintendo games today are, eventually, going to want something more. You only play arcade for so long. I think the challenge comes back to us, as one of the pre-eminent game publishers, to offer the consumer that next step.'

What about the success of FTL's Dungeon Master? Would Infocom ever consider such a game design? 'I think it's a very interesting approach. However, we don't want to copy any one person. What we're looking for is something more. I can't tell you exactly because I don't know. A little bit is exploration and a little bit is finding that developer with the right idea who says 'We got a way to make that happen for you'.'

It will appear to many adventurers that the heart has been taken out of Infocom with the exit of Lebling, Meretsky and Moriarty. However, the former two writers may still return, and Mark Blanc is still there, of course. Coming to terms with a new Infocom will be difficult for the players, yet it will be even harder for the adventure giant themselves. If it is to maintain any independence it must be in profit. There is no point in solely producing text-only (or even standard text/graphic adventures) if the company sinks gracefully into the sand.

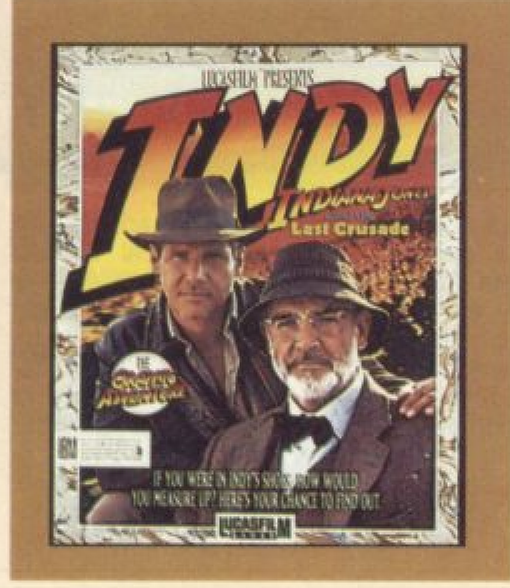
However distasteful RPGs are to Infocom fans, if it brings home the readies then that's the way it is. It is easy to see by the degree of outside co-operation (the likes of Westwood with Battletech and Tom Snyder Productions with Infocomics) that Infocom themselves are having trouble getting to grips with the impending technology. In the meantime Infocom did what it has always done best, and produced Shogun, Journey and Zork Zero using its own designers.

It will be interesting to see if this situation continues or if even the internal developers, such as newcomer Mike Moore, create RPGs and the like. There are no real answers, of course, we must all wait and see...

Apple Mac original. Infocom tried to port the game over to the PC but the task proved to be too difficult so the game has been dropped.

Lucasfilm have three big releases on the horizon. The first, Indiana Jones (previewed in Issue 20), should be with us in September. The next is the follow up to the wondrous Battlehawks. The sequel is based on the Battle of Britain and is called, Their Finest Hour. According to AJ 'Red' Redma, Director of Development at Lucasfilm, the combat simulator will include another heavy manual and a vector coordinate codewheel. The simulator improves over Battlehawks: the aircraft do not always start at the same position, for example. In addition, you can make your own custom missions and camera videos which can be passed amongst your friends, loaded on bulletin boards, etc. Take off and landing may be integrated. But the final decision about that had not been made. Their Finest Hour should appear in November.

Finally, the graphic-adventure, Loom, written by erstwhile Infocom man Brian Moriarty, should appear during January 1990. Loom will arrive with a full Lucasfilm audio production, including music, actors, narrators, and so on. Lasting about 25 minutes, it gives the background to the story. During which you will hear the character's voices who take part in the game. The tape



finishes at the point at which you start the game. You can also get a CD version, which includes several music scores based on different game themes... free! All you have to do is return a card, which is included within the game and Lucasfilm will send you your CD.

I have heard some interesting rumours concerning Lucasfilm working with **Origin Systems**. The latter are well known for their Ultima series, of course. Nothing concrete as yet but the possibilities are intriguing, don't you think? Speaking about Origin, I was recently chatting to Richard 'Lord British' Garriot about his new release schedule. After hearing the details of them I had to lie down in a darkened room for a bit. They sound like they will be pretty earth shattering. I am totally impressed with Origin's determination to move away from RPG hack 'n' slash. Ultima IV and V showed how successful that approach can be. Ultima VI will continue this theme.

The story revolves around you meeting a race of people who have totally different philisophical beliefs to your own. The story asks you to resolve those differences, it is


PRESS ANY KEY



up to you how you do it. The game world will be of a similar size to Ultima V but with an immense amount of extra detail. For the first time, the Ultima world will be on the same scale. No more moving your character icon over a town icon and entering that way. The scale for Ultima VI will be the town scale! For the whole Ultima world! Finer detail, greater economic effects, more realistic character personalities, improved combat and artificial intelligence means Ultima VI, early next year, will be something to behold.

And then there's Ultima VII. What!?! Yep, Richard's already started work on that too! What else of the future? Well, look forward to Origin's Dungeon Master-killer! No dates, but work is underway.

Other games include a sequel to Times of Lore, with a science-fiction scenario, but using the same system. An improved Times system is being configured for a fantasy-type game which will appear later. Expected from now till the autumn are the following releases. Moebius II, which, apparently, is much improved over the original. Knights of Legend which features the most detailed character creation and combat system yet seen, as well as excellent 'first person' graphics. You ca n design your own weapons and kit yourself out in one of hundreds of different armour combinations. Space Rogue is a mixture of 3-D space flight simulation (designed by the same people who created Chuck Yeager's Flight Trainer) and Ultima RPG. Finally, Omega, previously called T.A.N.C., is a unique tank simulation. You play a cybernetic engineer who must design the tank chassis, artificial intelligence, add weapons and electronics to produce the ultimate tank. Then you take it into battle. Omega introduces a Cybertank Command Language, which is used to program the tank, for the experienced players. Pre-designed capsule routines are provided for inexperienced players.

Phew!! Well I've run out of space. There is so much to tell and so little room! Next month I hope to begin regular reviews of home-produced adventures. So please send in your works of art, for my attention. In addition, if you have any comments or thoughts please jot them down and send your letters to me. Maybe you would like to talk about graphics in Infocom games, puzzles in RPGs, artificial intelligence and 3-D graphics in strategy games, home-produced adventures, your most favourite/hated games, etc. If you have something to say, why not say it here. There's plenty of room with me at the top of the column. Just me and the pigeons...

Paul Rigby, TGM, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB.

OK, I'm a little late with this one. But I couldn't let it pass me by without telling the world first. Panther Games, like SSG, are another strategy house from Australia. It is interesting to see Ian Trout (of SSG) as one of the playtesters for Fire Brigade.

In this operational level wargame you take the part of either the commander of the German 4th Panzer Army or the Soviet 1st Ukranian Front Army. The centre of attention being Kiev during 1943.

In three scenarios, the first campaign (3 November 1943) follows the Soviet attempt to liberate Kiev. The Soviets have the initial advantage, with sheer weight of numbers. The German commander must hold his position waiting for reinforcements. The second scenario (15 November 1943) follows the German counter attack, with the 48 Panzer Korps at Korosten. This time it's the Soviets who must hold on and consolidate their stretched supply lines. In the third scenario another German counter attack takes place. Both sides have re-equipped so the battle is more even than the first two scenarios.

Fire Brigade arrives in a sturdy box with an 80-page manual plus a colour map and orders of battle for each scenario. I must say that the quality of presentation and attention given to the player is second to none. It is either mouse or keyboard driven with good use of icons and pull-down menus. Reports are clear and informative, there is even a Deluxe Paint-type palette box to change the onscreen colours!

An excellent tutorial takes you through the game. It takes two stages, allowing you to get used to the basics before introducing you to the advanced features. Fire Brigade

Amiga, ST £19.99 (also on PC £24.99)

PALADIN

Artronic/Omnitrend



Paladin, licensed from US software house Omnitrend by Artronic, is largely a strategy game with roleplaying overtones. You play a paladin who commands a band of rangers, swordsmen, thieves and mages. You must complete a number of different quests, ten in all. Your ultimate aim is to become a knight. Quests range from inflicting 80% casualties upon the enemy and leaving the combat area to rescuing a number of prisoners. Adversaries include zombies, dragons, fighters, sorcerors and spirits — who, literally, scare you to death. If, at any time, your knightly champion is killed, the game ends. However, the only way you will improve your character is to actively participate in combat. Reaching knight status results in your character receiving an improved set of armour and an enhanced sword. The latter will be needed to complete the very difficult Knight Quests.

During combat each character has a range of weapons they can carry (limited by their encumbrance value), which include orbs of fire (grenades), crossbows, etc. Movement is limited to the amount of movement points each character has. Commands are issued via icons and clicking upon the combat area. Similar in many respects to the 8-bit Laser Squad, Paladin is a good attempt at a tactical combat game. It does fall down, though, as you can only move and fire weapons in four directions, instead of the more realistic eight. Enemy artificial intelligence is fairly predictable but you will still have plenty of opportunity for creating tactics. ST and Amiga versions only differ in the quality of the sampled spot effects (more, of which, are heard for one meg machines). An excellent Questbuilder allows you to construct your own quests. In addition, there are extra scenario disks on the way.



Presentation	86%
AI	78%
Atmosphere	80%
Engagement	76%
System	84%
Overall	81%

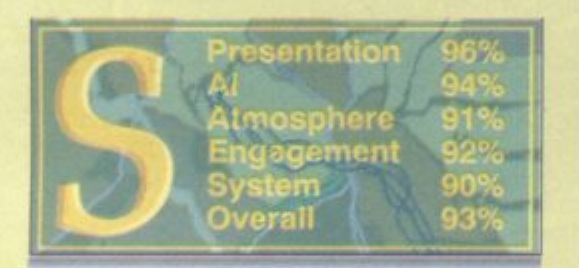


takes nothing for granted so a complete wargame beginner should have no problems, yet the expert is well-catered for.

Kiev was memorable in that there were no real fronts. Small, individual fronts were dotted over the combat area, with reserves backing up when possible. It was often the case that forces would find themselves, in effect, within enemy territory.

Fire Brigade is a quality product which should reside amongst any wargamer's collection. Strangely, the PC version is superior to the Amiga. The latter has a rather slow screen update and while it has excellent graphics, the PC's EGA graphics are even better as they are in high resolution. However, the update does not spoil the Amiga version too much.





Presentation	96%
AI	94%
Atmosphere	91%
Engagement	92%
System	90%
Overall	93%

FIRE BRIGADE

Amiga, PC £29.99 Panther Games/Mindscape

Amiga, ST £19.99

LEGEND CRL

The background's pretty simple. You have one good brother, living in a castle at one end of the country, and one evil brother living in a castle at the other end. Each owns half a staff (magical, all-powerful, etc.) and, would you believe it, they're each after the other half. Enter one fantasy wargame.

You begin the game (solo or two-player) as one of the brothers or sisters (yeah! there's a female option). You must quickly hire an army with your limited supply of funds. To do this you cycle through a small database of character cards which displays a small cameo graphic of each leader, their background, their strengths, weapon and armour-type, alignment, magical energy (which can be used tactically or strategically), combat speed and army size. Hiring charges vary.

When you do control an army you can begin to occupy the country, which is divided up into a variety of sectors. When you occupy a sector you can build upon it. Choices include mines (more income), temples (reduce healing costs), monoliths (allow magic points to be gained) and so on.

Special characters can be hired. They are quite expensive but they have special talents. Some have magical talents, some are generally destructive (such as the dragon), others are selective (the assassin). When you go to battle the screen changes to show icons representing the opposing armies. Combat is mostly automatic. However you do have the option to retreat or flee.

I must say that I thoroughly enjoyed playing Legend. There are criticisms which can be leveled at it. It's a shame that you have no control over close combat. The documentation is only 'adequate' and the graphics depicting human faces childish. However, I still enjoyed it. Legend is easy to get into yet will keep you glued to the screen until the wee small hours.



Presentation	71%
AI	83%
Atmosphere	85%
Engagement	72%
System	88%
Overall	80%

Amiga £32.50

REEL FISH'N
Interstel

(Available from Computer Adventure World, Bank Buildings, 1A Charing Cross, Birkenhead L41 6EJ. Tel: (051) 666 1132.)

All the way from the USA is a bass fishing simulation from Interstel (producers of Star Fleet 1 and Empire). Reel Fish'n was written by Roger Damon, well known for the SSI wargames Field of Fire and Wargame Construction Set.

After selecting your fishing day, according to the projected weather forecast, you retire to the kitchen. By clicking on various icons you can examine the up-to-date weather forecast, view the available lakes where you will fish, the cost to get there, projected quality of Bass fish, read a weekly fishing tip and then enter the tackle shop.

At the tackle shop you may purchase a variety of lures which include surface plugs, crank bait, bottom bouncers and specials. In addition you may purchase superior boats, maintenance kits and depthfinder equipment. Available cash is the limiting factor here. Your daily job will provide some funds but the big money is only available by entering fishing tournaments.

After selecting your lake the screen changes to an overhead view of the boat, as well as a small side-view of the shore. From here you can sail to your required swim, drop anchor, select your lure, select fast or slow reel and cast. A small window shows what's going on under the surface. When a bass darts up to the lure and takes it you must strike. All reel and rod actions are mouse controlled. Normally, the larger the fish the more you must 'play' him. Understandably, this part of the simulation is the most exciting. Your catch is automatically weighed and stored in a 'live well'. All of this taking place amongst the sampled sounds of nature — most relaxing.

Reel Fish'n is an excellent attempt at simulating bass fishing. While it is not a



perfect simulation, no groundbait feature for example, it is still a worthy attempt which I can thoroughly recommend.



Amiga (also on ST, PC, C64, Spectrum +3)

MYTH

Magnetic Scrolls



(Exclusively available to members of Official Secrets, PO Box 847, Harlow CM21 9PH. Tel: 0279 726541/600204.)

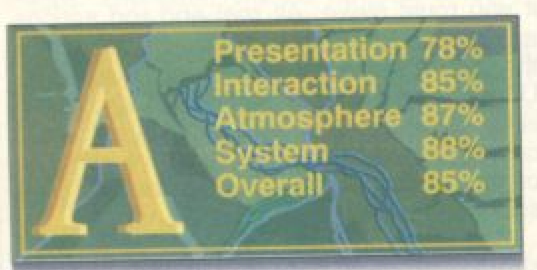
In a marketing dream come true, Official Secrets (the Adventurers' Club) have the exclusive honour of having their very own Magnetic Scrolls adventure.

The story revolves around a rather inept Poseidon. God of the Sea and can't swim. As he says himself: 'Have you any idea how difficult it is to look godlike and awe-inspiring clad in a pair of red water-wings?'

In a effort to counter the growing surge of Christianity, Zeus, the numero uno among gods, has decided to set a task for the other gods to 'tighten our slack attitudes, rout our complacent outlooks and rid ourselves of these pot-bellies.'

Thus you, Poseidon, have the first task. To steal Hades' helmet of invisibility from the throne room of his palace.

The only real drawback of this adventure is its rather short length. After saying that, though, the delays Myth has suffered have largely been due to the programmers expanding and adding to the adventure. Apparently, Myth was never supposed to be as large as it is now. There are no fancy trinkets or manuals included, the disk arrives in a simple folder with minimal documentation. The parser can cope with most inputs, the few graphics are good, as is the interaction with other characters. Overall, Myth, which shows some detailed research by the author, is an enjoyable jaunt amongst the Greek deities.



Amiga (also on PC) £29.99

ARTHUR: THE QUEST FOR EXCALIBUR

Infocom

Infocom have gone Arthurian on us. However, they've bent the rules a bit; this particular tale would have the Austin brothers reaching for their reference books in horror. In this tale of boy meets sword, you play young Arthur who discovers that he can pull the infamous sword out of the stone. Upon doing so Merlin appears, gives you a quick run down about your past and tells you to put the sword back as you're not worthy enough, yet. The adventure revolves around you becoming, well, worthy. This is reflected in the unique scoring system which measures your chivalry, wisdom, experience and quest points.

Infocom's hints are available. A system which, as I have mentioned in the past, I am all in favour of (let's face it, if haven't got the will power to not look at the onscreen hints you will not have the will power to resist phoning up a friend, looking up a solution, etc.). Included as function key commands are onscreen mapping and a compass rosette, inventory, a description of your surroundings without wasting a turn, text-only screens and your score.

The graphics are used well. There is one sequence at the beginning which uses the main scene graphic but which adds and subtracts items from it as they are manipulated by the characters. A bit like those old

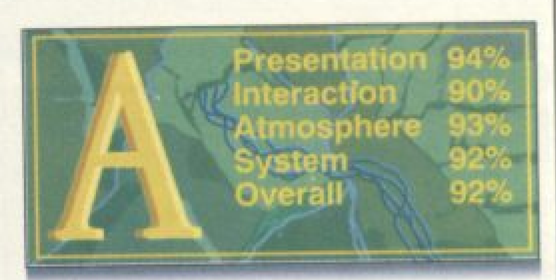




Adventure International games. Puzzles are inventive, especially when you have the opportunity to change your shape into a variety of woodland animals later in the game (more sounds of the Austin brothers leafing through books in distress). Many of the puzzles revolve around the 'find me an object and I'll let you cross the bridge' type. However, they are well designed.

There has, in some quarters, been criticism aimed at Infocom's character interaction, where characters are accused of being too 'static' in comparison to other systems, such as Level 9's character handling. Well, Level 9 may be the innovators as far as 'wandering' characters are concerned but their system is far from perfect. I much prefer Infocom's character handling (whose characters are not all static, incidentally) to Level 9's aimless wanderings. At least, when you play an Infocom game you feel like you're playing a finished product and not taking part in an unfinished experiment.

Arthur is another cracking Infocom adventure. Clever design, excellent parser and wonderful text make the adventure thoroughly enjoyable. Grab yourself a cup of cocoa and spoil yourself.



Amiga £32.50

PRIME TIME

First Row

(Available from Computer Adventure World, Bank Buildings, 1A Charing Cross, Birkenhead L41 6EJ. Tel: (051) 666 1132.)

Prime Time is comparable to all of those football manager programs milling around. However, in Prime Time you are an American Network TV Programme Scheduler. Your job, working for station ABT, is to outdo the competition by topping the TV ratings and receiving lots of lovely advertising revenue. You have one year to prove your worth or you're out on your ear.

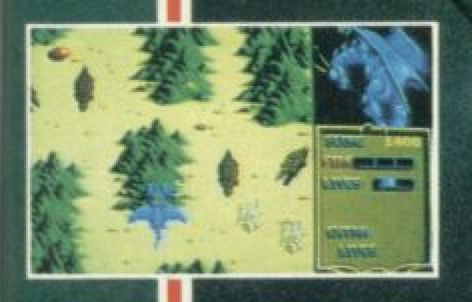
Prime Time is mainly controlled from your desk. Clicking on different areas brings up a variety of screens. You can buy shows from studios, develop them yourself (expensive), drop them completely, push them with commercial hype, or even change their broadcast time. A regular graphic depicting the trade paper Variety supplies clues to growing viewing trends. Manipulating your program schedule is tense and fast as you only have a short time to complete each month's plan. Once the time runs out you lose money from your budget (£10,000 per second over the time limit!).

In addition, there are graphic sequences showing your competitor's plans, as well as a random silly advertisements which pop up as a sort of commercial break from the game. Prime Time makes full use of the Amiga's SAY digitiser, but sequences using this facility slow the game down as you cannot disable the SAY routine.

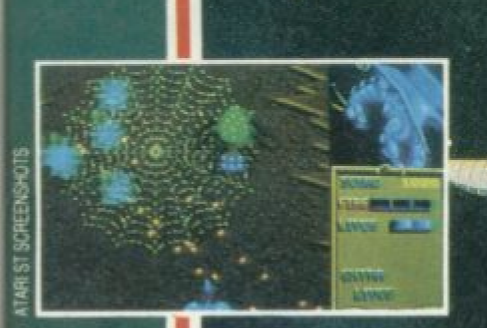
The Amiga is not exactly awash with this sort of program and, as it is, Prime Time is a good example of the genre.



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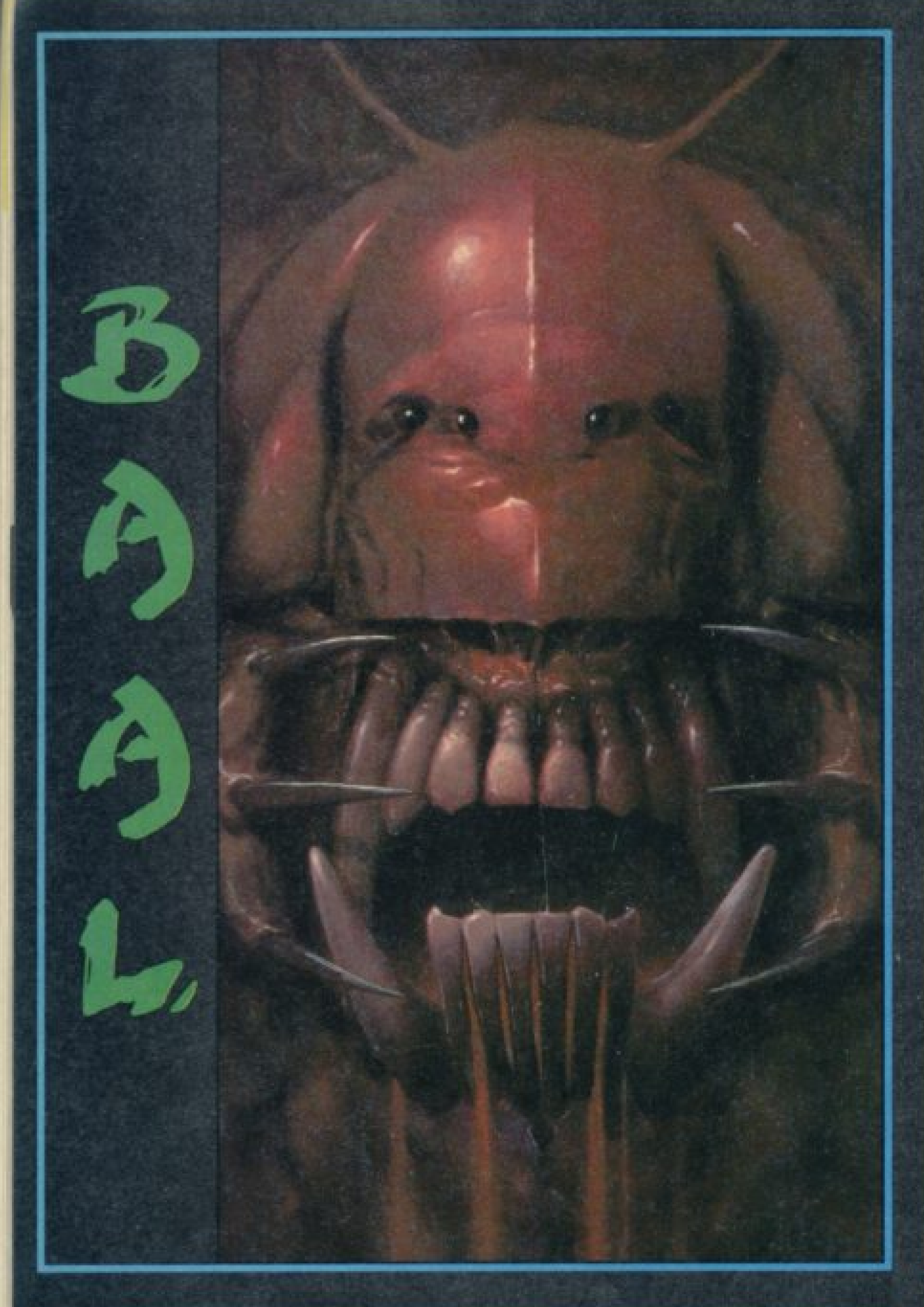
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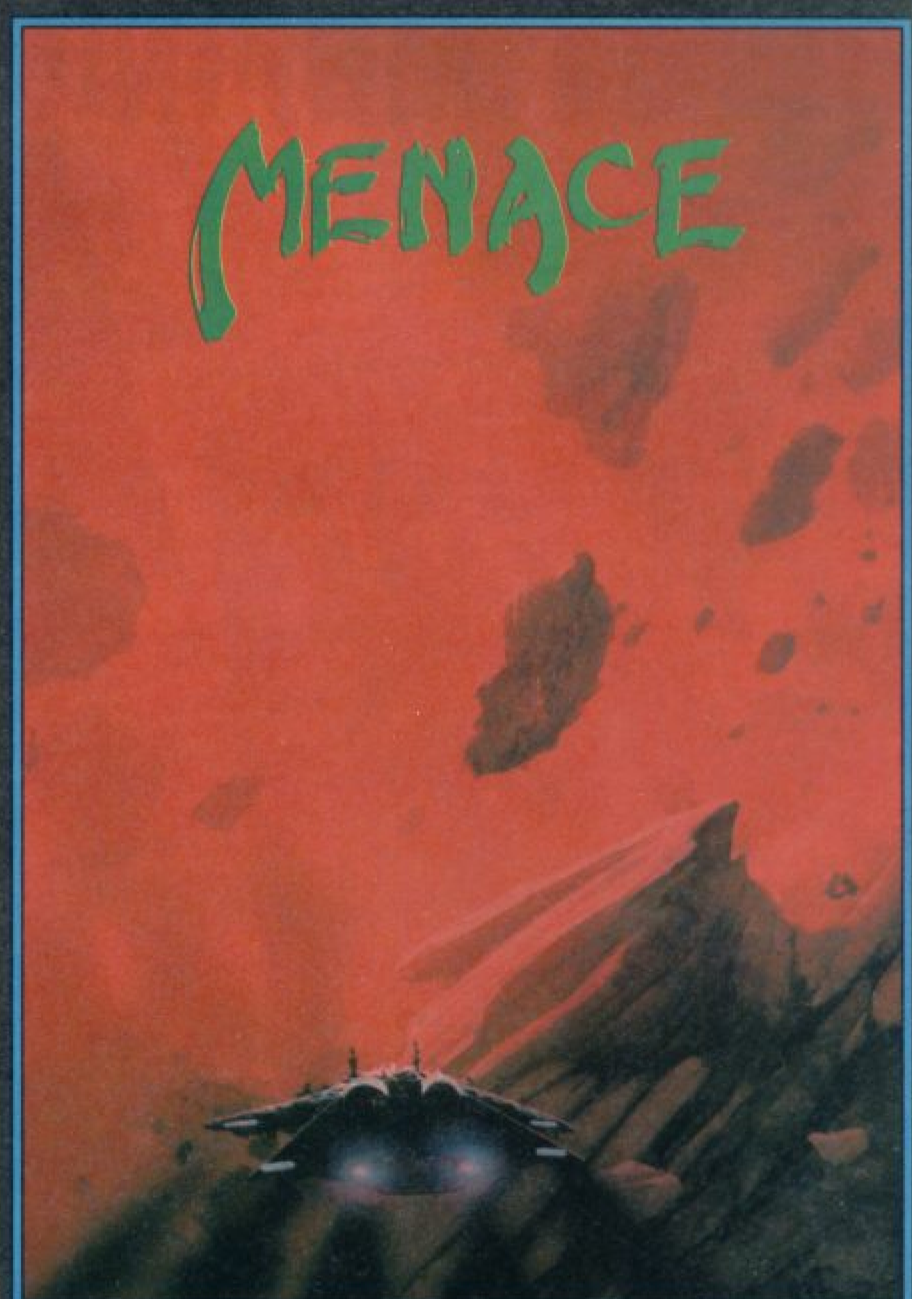
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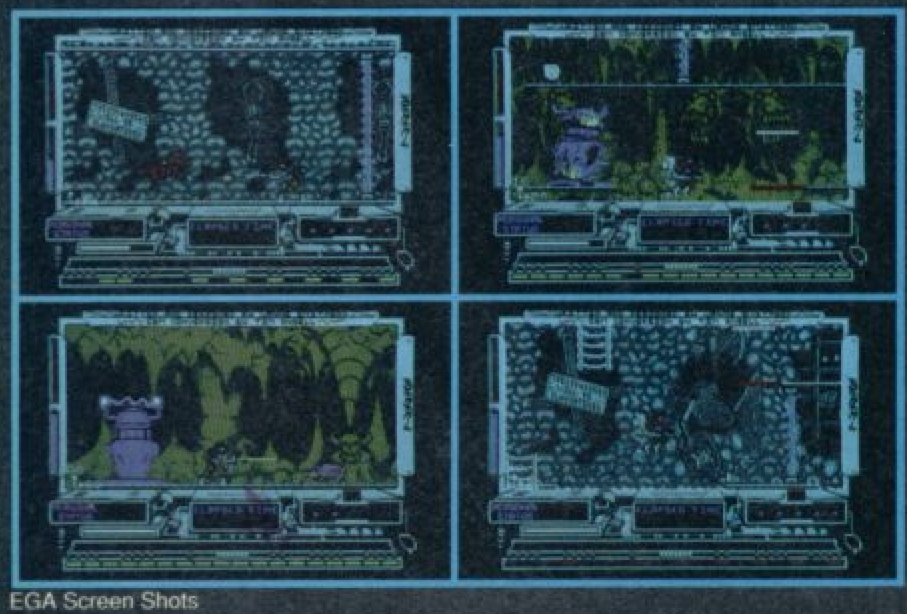
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78 ■ SHADOW OF THE BEAST

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80 ■ XENON 2 — MEGABLAST

At last the sequal to the classy Bitmap Brother classic Xenon finally hits the 16-bit machines. Although not programmed by the Bros, a development team called The Assembly Line do a great job. Add to this a def soundtrack by music maestro David Whittaker and you get a game that deserves the title 'Mega'.



STAR PLAYER

84 ■ STRIDER

Japanese coin-slot action arrives in the form of Strider Hiryu, star of this swashbuckling Capcom tale of evil Lords, strange lands and even stranger denizens. All Strider has for protection is a laser sword and a gymnastic skill that Bruce Lee would be envious of. Think you could save the world from the Evil of Lord Eurasia, then buy US Gold's Strider, strap on your sword, tie those springs to your feet and go get 'em.



82 ■ APB

Help Officer Bob in his pursuit of law and order as he chases a cornucopia of felons in Domark's APB. Third of the series of games released under the Tengen licence APB impresses with its cartoon style graphics and high speed car chases. Essential for budding law enforcement officers, the game's great for just about anybody.



STAR UPDATES

85 ■ XYBOTS - C64

Domark/Tengen's split-screen game scores on the Commodore 64.

91 ■ BARBARIAN 2 - AMIGA

A year after its acclaimed C64 release, bigger brothers get a chance to explore the dungeons of Drax in this famous hack 'n' slay sequel from Palace.

93 ■ THE NEW ZEALAND STORY - SPEC/C64/ST

Cute, colourful and highly addictive, Ocean's coin-op conversion works well on all formats.

GENERAL INDEX

AMIGA

Barbarian 2 91
Black Magic........................96
Chariots of Wrath.............85
Fast Break..........................96
Great Courts 92
Jack Nicklaus Golf 85
Mr Heli...............................87
Paperboy............................96
Red Heat.............................87
Rollout................................96
Shadow of the Beast.........78
Shufflepuck Cafe..............97
Sleeping Gods Lie............85
Strider 84
Trivial Pursuit 93
Xenon 2..............................80

ATARI ST

Aaargh 90
APB.....................................82
Dynamite Dux 86
Eye of Horus 86
Paperboy............................96
The New Zealand Story ...93
Xenon 2..............................80

COMMODORE 64/128

Aaargh 90
First Strike.........................90
Hostages............................91
Mr Heli...............................87
The New Zealand Story ...93
Tusker 92
Xybots................................85

AMSTRAD CPC

Licence to Kill....................81
Mr Heli...............................87
Strider 84

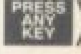
SPECTRUM

Aaargh 90
APB.....................................82
Licence to Kill....................81
Mazemania 97
Mr Heli...............................87
The New Zealand Story ...93

PC

Caveman Ugh-Lympics....81
Licence to Kill....................81

TGM only reviews finished games and not preview demos as is customary with some magazines.



Yea, though I walk through the valley of the

SHADOW OF THE BEAST

Psygnosis

For countless summers, you have enjoyed the supreme, supernatural powers as a warrior-messenger of the Beast-Mages, devilish dictators of your world. It was they who kidnapped you as a child and used their mystical potions so that, as you grew, you became a towering man-goat of great strength and agility. In the process of developing these hell-spawned capabilities, hypnosis erased any memory of your previous existance as a mere human.

Or so the warlocks thought. Somewhere in the unfathomable depths of your eldritch mind, a fragile shred of humanity remained, a slight sympathetic association stimulated most alarmingly this day. A horrific view of death, reflected in your Globe of Seeing: men, women, children, dragged screaming to the sacrificial stone,slain by the mages in the name of the Beast they worship. And someone strangely significant, killed as mercilessly as the others. Your father.

The memories of human life flooded back, then the horrific metamorphosis the mages forced upon you, and the years serving the Beast which caused the death of your father and countless other members of your race. Vowing revenge, sweet revenge, upon your masters and their minions,

The world presented in Shadow Of The Beast scrolls horizontallyas the warrior-messenger sprints atheletically through sixstages. Beginning amid a glorious country landscape at sunset, avast moon still visible high in the sky and the Beast-Mages' Zeppelin patrolling above, a door set into a tree trunk (somewhat unsubtley indicated by a flashing red sign) leads to a cavern filled with a network of platforms and ladders. Later scenes take place in a castle, a graveyard and inside the slimy ribcage of along-dead giant animal.

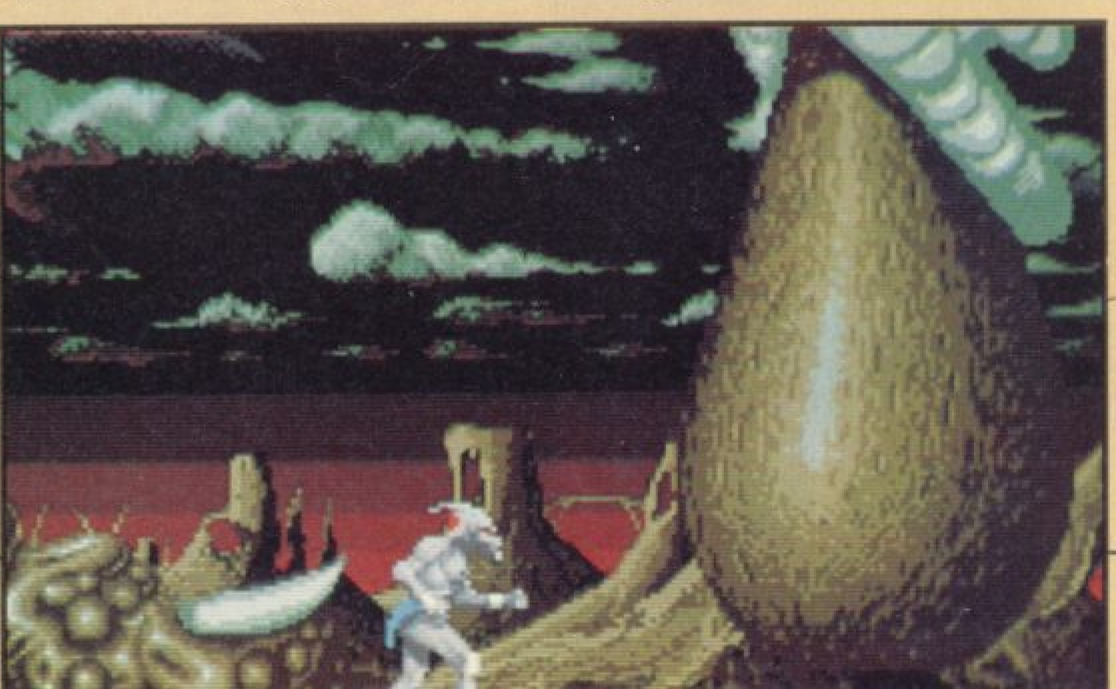
The powers of the Beast and the vigilance of its followers ensure that the goat-like messenger is set against a steady stream of monsterous assailants. All manner of demons and serpents, ghouls,skulls, eyeballs, axe-wielding goblins, spiders, speeding snails... there are too many to describe but most are of a significant, worrying size.

The messenger can deliver a mighty blow with his hardened fists which can kill or at least weaken monsters. His punch-power may be increased by picking up a suitable icon and extra weapons,such as an ice-shield or laser rifle, can be gained. For one stage of the game the laser is supplemented by a jet-pack and a highly polished mask.

The goat-warrior only has one life and his currrent state of health is indicated by a cardiograph in the upper-left corner of the screen. As he is wounded, his rate increases until his two hearts burst and he rapidly decays into a crumbled corpse. There are objects to restore health, some by a fraction and some that completely revitalise the man-goat. Certainly he'll need all his power for the final stage, where he confronts the Beast itself...

Psygnosis told Martin Edmondson and

Edmondson and Howarth's Amiga graphics for Beast *are evident throughout, from the 13-parallax-outdoor scenes (top) to the huge indoor sprites*



Paul Howarth, programmers of Ballistix (84%, TGM018), to let their imaginations run riot and write the ultimate game. While it would be overkill to label Shadow Of The Beast as such a mega-game, it's certainly an innovative 16-bit product. Not only are advanced coding techniques used to create the best visuals seen on a 16-bit game of this type, Beast is a vast exploration beat-'em-up with 350 screens of fast and hectic action.

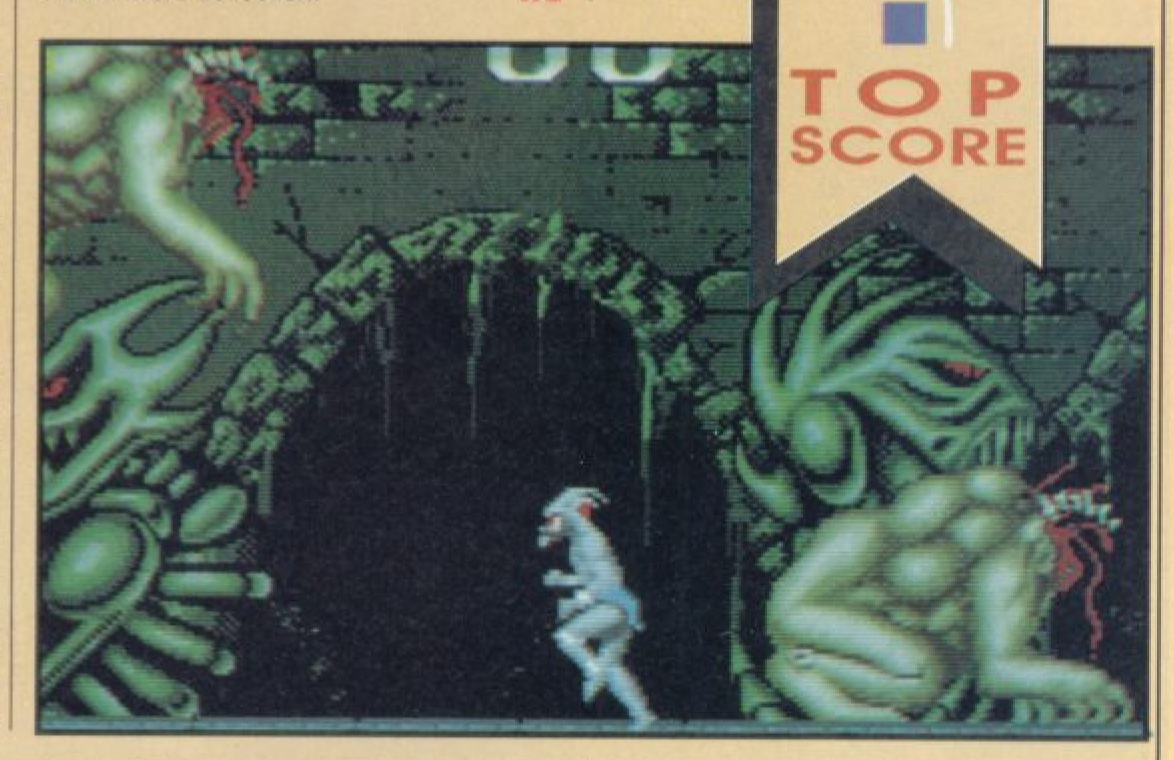
There are also arcade adventure elements: keys have to be found to gain access to certain areas of the game, special weapons have to be gathered to defeat more powerful enemies, and scenery elements have to be manipulated to neutralise traps.

Presentation is high, both in the game and in the generously sized packaging; included with a disk is a T-shirt with a full-colour segment of the cover illustration, as seen on this issue's cover.

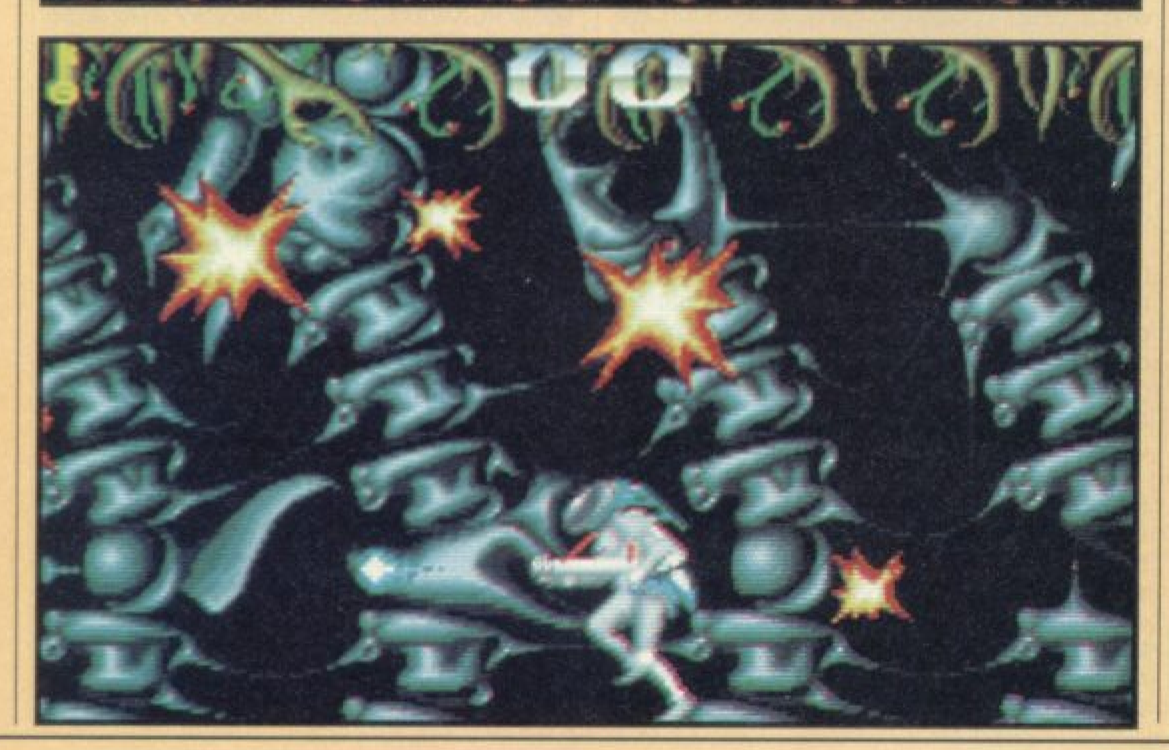
■ The arcade-like gameplay has arcade-like difficulty, ie, it is TOUGH! While stage one shouldn't prove too much of a problem, getting any way into the game will take a lot of skill but perseverance reaps great rewards. Fast, direct and highly playable action keeps you coming back time and time again until the Beast itself is defeated and all the fantastic monsters have been seen. Shadow Of The Beast is an amazing program with addictive play that should form a part of any Amiga owners software collection. **WL**

The Games machine

TOP SCORE







AMIGA **96%**

£34.95

A number of quality hi-res pictures add greatly to the presentation, particularly those preceding each stage, which each have an adventure-like description scrolling below them. In-game graphics are little short of amazing. In outdoor scenes, 13 layers of parallax make up the ground and sky, each scrolling incredibly smoothly as the mythical messenger runs quickly. Indoors, there are only two layers but the foreground graphics —platforms, ladders and curious aesthetic features — are large, and, like the visuals as a whole, are stunningly defined. Stage one's scenery is beautiful and idyllic but the monsters are of a completely different nature. Colour and form are professionally used on each of the 132 creatures, a nasty and horrific menagerie of varied design in a nightmare world. Some of the bigger monsters are a quarter of the screen in size yet still move smoothly and are among the best ever seen in a computer game. The truly arcade-quality graphics are backed by a brilliant soundtrack, by David Whittaker. Music has an ancient, mystical feel, dramatic and highly atmospheric, and loud arcade-like spot effects highlight the action. A ground-breaking game making full use of the Amiga, Shadow Of The Beast is technically brilliant and great fun.

OTHER FORMATS

Completely rewritten and lacking the dazzling specification of the Amiga, the ST version is still sure to be a feast for the eye when it's released at the end of the year. The PC will follow,and will probably only support VGA mode.

PRESS ANY KEY

The Games machine TOP SCORE

Would you buy a used Electroball from this alien...?

XENON 2 MEGABLAST



Imageworks

Bros have returned! The youthful game design/programming trio, The Bitmap Brothers, that is, who have achieved considerable fame despite only two previous major releases. From the dual-vehicle blasting of the original Xenon released by Melbourne House (gaining 88% way back in TGM005) then changing allegiances to Imageworks for the violent futuresport of Speedball (86% in TGM019), their work has been popular enough to generate great enthusiasm for the release of their Megablast.

Enter another team, the as yet mysterious Assembly Line. They transformed the Bitmap's design into code, along with graphics by Mark Coleman and music by David Whittaker, translating the Bomb The Bass (Tim Simonen) track Megablast to computer — hence the blaster's sub-title.

Who needs plot for a shoot-'em-up? If you do, briefly: the Xenites — the bad guys of Xenon 1 — have exercised considerable patience and waited a thousand years to wreak vengeance on the Federation, the very nice men who defeated them in the great Galactic Conflict. They've planted Time Bombs in five places through history and the universe may not survive the inter-dimensional explosion if the heavily-guarded devices aren't neutralised. And guess who's been chosen to save civilisation as we or any other creatures know it? Yup, you.

The gist of any vertically scrolling progressive shoot-'em-up needs no explanation, but the adversaries faced during this one are more plentiful and varied than any other game you'll have seen.

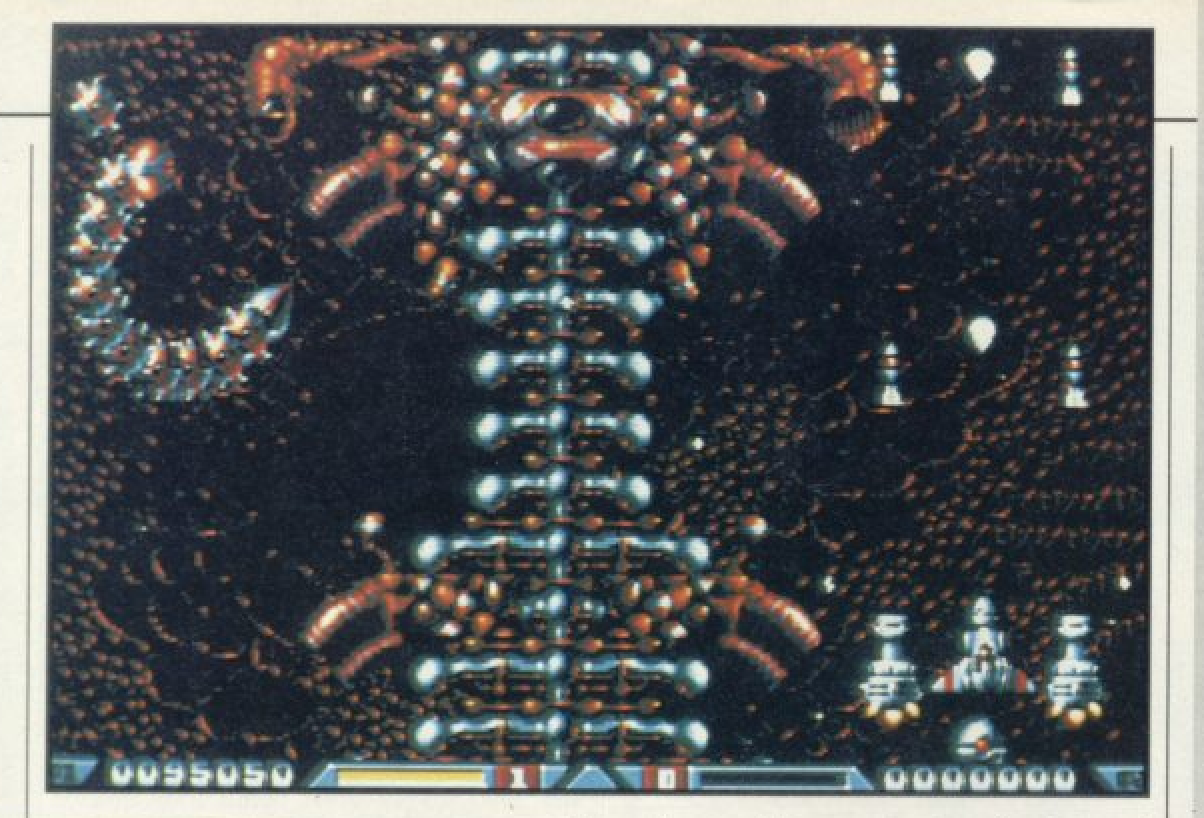
There are add-on weapons to match — too many to name here. Simple modifications such as speed-ups and rear-firing guns can be gained by collecting the appropriate icons but most cost money. Waves of opponents or singular tough ones leave behind transparent credits of different values.

Twice per level, the Swop Shop is visited (no Noel Edmonds quips, please). First, any equipment already gained may be sold to the horned reptilian alien who acts as a somewhat unusual shopkeeper — but don't expect a good price! A bank of monitors then shows any affordable add-ons. The name and cost of each device can be called up with no obligation to purchase — with such a wide selection and prices ranging from 200 to 6000, it's just as well.

Manoeuvrability also takes on a grander scale in Xenon 2, with the ability to reverse the scrolling direction (for a limited distance) by backing to the bottom of the screen. Also, with the Dive add-on, the space bar lowers the Megablaster battlecraft away from dangerous attack waves. Another press returns the craft to its usual altitude, hopefully in a reasonably safe position, but it can only stay at the lesser elevation for seven seconds — beware.

So, has all the waiting and anticipation been worth it? The answer is a resounding Yes. From the opening seconds of your first game it's clear that this is an extremely classy and highly polished blaster, and also a very challenging one. The opponents approach in devious, threatening patterns and all are of pleasingly vicious, alien design, especially the huge end-of-level adversaries.

The brilliantly presented and cleverly thought-out shop is the place to plan your attack, with the help of an amusing alien. Complete with Walkman, which he turns off as you enter, he frowns and rubs his chin





Tremendous graphics help make Xenon 2 a classic shoot-'em-up on both the Amiga (top left and above) and the ST (far left and top right)

as he considers a price to offer. Then of course there's a wide selection of weapons to purchase from him: drone, bomb, double-shot, electroball, rear-shot, Bitmap shades (!), flamer... the list goes on.

The ability to reverse is a great idea, necessary when faced with one of the level's dead ends and handy for giving manoeuvring room to evade and destroy particularly nasty aliens. It helps transform an already highly playable shoot-'em-up into a classic, addictive one — you won't rest until you've seen the amazing graphics of all five testing levels.

Even if you're not a shoot-'em-up fan, this game should still be at the top of your shopping list; it's by far the best blaster of the year so far. It's highly unlikely to lose that title and is sure to go down as one of the top five games of 1989. An arcade quality game and an essential purchase.

WL

ATARI ST 95%

£24.99

Appropriately, the introductory sequence begins with a loud sampled remix of Megablast, the instrumental, as titles begin. Cinematic sci-fi credits are then backed by an interpretation of the track using ST-generated sounds — quite a let down, as are the very ordinary in-game spot effects. Graphics are a very different matter. The sprites are imaginative in conception and brilliant in execution; colour and texture are used skilfully to shade creatures and ships in a manner both realisitic and highly impressive. The same can be said for the backgrounds, which scroll in smooth, three-layer parallax. When combined with the many powerful add-on weapons, bullets, missiles, lasers and flames shooting in all directions, Xenon 2 is a truly awesome sight. A superlative ST shoot-'em-up.

AMIGA 96%

£24.99

To get the bad news over with first, loading procedures are a bit of a bind: the shop is loaded in separately and afterward the level has to be reloaded. Yawn. Patience reaps its own rewards, however, with David Whittaker's professionally re-sequenced version of Megablast combining nicely with quality effect to form an excellent soundtrack. The title screen version is better still, strewn with brilliant and often amusing samples that set the mood for the game perfectly. In definition and movement, graphics are identical to the ST but the playing area is marginally wider for greater manoeuvrability. A classic sounding, looking and playing blaster, wholly deserving of the prefix 'Mega'.

OTHER FORMATS

PC to follow shortly at £24.99. Don't hold your breath, but as Speedball and Xenon (1) were both (eventually) converted to 8-bits, Commodore 64 and Spectrum versions are a faint possibility in the future.

VERSION UPDATES

PC
Caveman Ugh-Lympics

ELECTRONIC ARTS/DYNAMIX £24.99
Commodore 64 83% — TGM014

After all of the Epyx sports games which have appeared over the years it's nice to see someone taking the pee out of the genre. Caveman Ugh-Lympics on the PC is a colourful if slightly strange insight into



prehistoric competitive sports. The comic book style in which the game is presented works very well and is genuinely amusing, as are the events such as Dino Riding, Clubbing and Sabre Racing. Overall if you're bored with all those conventional sports games take a look at Caveman Ugh-Lympics.

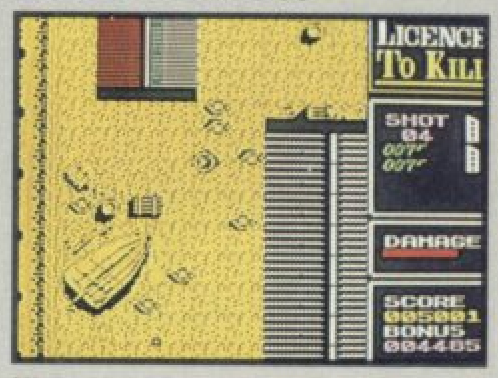
Machine update 80%

PC ■ SPECTRUM ■ AMSTRAD CPC
Licence to Kill

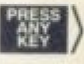
DOMARK £24.99 (PC), £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk (Spectrum, Amstrad)
Amiga 84%, Atari ST 84%, C64 83% — TGM021

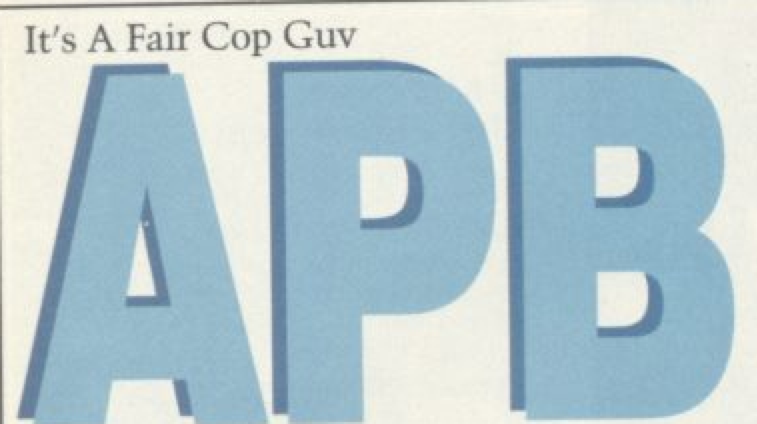
Mr 'shaken but not stirred' is out to find the man who turned his ex-CIA chum Felix into shark food. On the PC two disks are provided, one CGA the other EGA. In EGA mode the game's very colourful, and sound — for the PC — is rather good, especially the 'alternative' (as it has been dubbed) Bond theme tune on the title page. It's a pity that it falters when the computer flicks between the high score table and title screen. The Spectrum game — unsurprisingly monochromatic — has well defined sprites, but on the CPC the scrolling's a little on the jerky side, and the porky sprites aren't quite so well defined as on other versions. All in all Licence to Kill is full of the action Bond fans have come to expect over the last 37 years of his active service.

Machine update: PC 81%
Spectrum 80%
Amstrad CPC 75%



High speed Spectrum Bond thrills



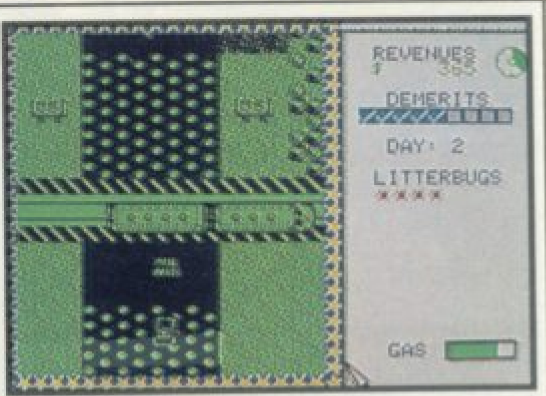


It's A Fair Cop Guv

APB

Tengen/Domark

The Games Machine STAR PLAYER



Get some arrests in quick! It's all in a day's work for harassed Officer Bob when an APB goes out on the ST (both to the left) and Spectrum (above)



We all know police get productivity bonuses for arrests made, and here's the game to prove it. The game starts gently enough with a couple of traffic cones to collect and return to the station. Then things get hectic. You're set loose on the freeways in your bright new patrol car chasing all sorts of felons.

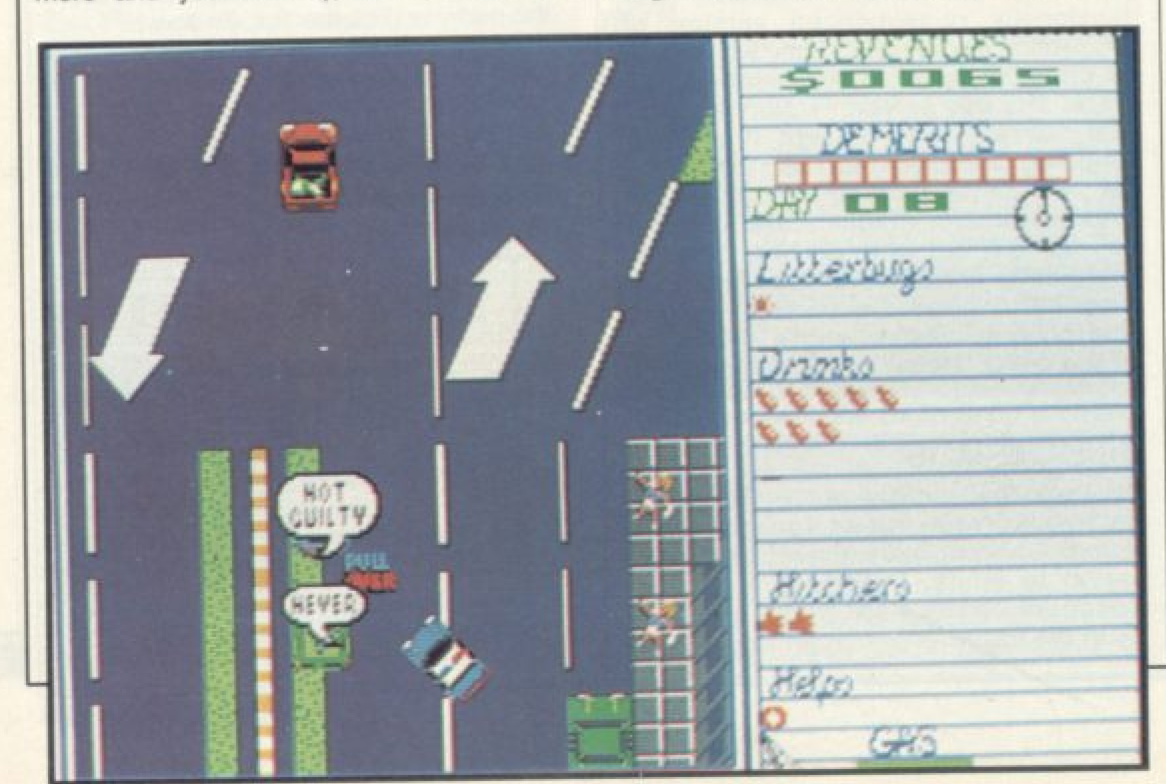
A note-pad displays your current cash situation, the amount of demerits against you (an allowance of ten are given, any more and you're fired), the numbers of types of felon to capture within a time limit, and the amount of gas left in the car. Spot a perp and a jab of the fire button sets the siren going — some villains need more persuasion to stop than others, so sometimes the siren needs repeated soundings. On your crusade for truth and justice watch out for innocent bystanders, shoot or ram them and the demerit level rises rapidly.

As you collect your villainous quota, the appropriate icon is removed from your daily quota. When all the listed baddies are caught, returning to the station rewards you with an early-bird bonus, a quota bonus and a gas bonus. Some real bad baddies get you a cash bonus, and the extra dosh can be spent at the speed shop for such goodies as armour, a gun, better brakes etc. Also a visit to the donut shop awards extra time and money.

When the occasional APB (all points bulletin) goes out on some very nasty characters such as Candy Goodbody, Sid Sniper and Freddy Freak, capturing them is one thing, but actually beating a confession out of them is quite another. On the confession screen waggle the joystick like mad before the Chief reaches the torture room door. A successful confession earns you a substantial reward and the satisfaction of seeing the felon behind bars.

Domark's previous two Tengen coin-op licences were great fun to play, and APB is no exception. The action's fast and rewarding and cartoon quality graphics (watch out for the hilarious sequence where a failed player is handcuffed and thrown into a dustbin) coupled with the potential for much maniacal driving, makes APB a highly recommended game.

MC



ATARI ST 84%

£19.99

Law enforcement has never been so much fun. With plenty of villains to apprehend and plenty of highway to explore, APB will keep law-abiding citizens playing until they've caught the last criminal mastermind.

SPECTRUM 86%

£9.99 cass, £14.99 disk

Monochromatic sprites whizz smoothly along the highway and the urge to capture baddies is compelling. Of the two versions reviewed here we feel the Spectrum game makes better use of the computer's capabilities, thus the slightly higher score.

OTHER FORMATS

Commodore 64 (£9.99 cass, £12.99 disk), Amstrad (£9.99 cass, £14.99 disk), PC and Amiga (£19.99) versions should be available by the time you read this.

STRYX









- ★ ***Ultra smooth 8 way scrolling***
- ★ ***Designed with small fully animated characters from Garvan Corbett, the artist who brought you the classic hit Barbarian***
- ★ ***Multi-directional free format weapon usage***
- ★ ***Large playfield for even more action.***

You're really up against it this time. Those revolting robots have finally upped and turned their horribly powerful weapons on their kind human masters.
Someone's got to stop it before it all gets out of hand. I mean, you just can't have bloodthirsty Cyborg assassins roaming the streets of Dome City and expect the citizens to put up with it. Who on earth is going to sort out the mess? You guessed – you get the job.

Fortunately, you are just a little bit on the special side. You are Stryx, the product of Project Alpha Secure, the meanest fighting, smartest thinking machine ever invented. Half-man, half-robot, you are the business, the only one who can stop those wicked Cyborgs.

You'll have to work hard, though, blasting hordes of the revolting creatures (such a sad waste of scrap metal) and rescuing the keys to the Lifeforce.

So, Stryx, you'd better get your jet pack on for some high level robot stomping through the immensely complex underground world of the Dome cities. It's a tough assignment, and time is running out.

AMIGA/ATARI ST £19.95

Screen Shots from the Atari ST Version

PSYGNOSIS
FREEPOST
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UNITED KINGDOM
Tel: 051-709 5755





PSYGNOSIS

GAMES PEOPLE PLAY



No Easy Strider

STRIDER

Capcom/US Gold

After the disappointing Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade, Tiertex are back on form with the computer version of one acrobatic Strider Hiryu's attempt to rid the world of evil Lord Eurasia. The year's 2048, and there are five increasingly difficult levels to the game.

First Strider drops from a hanglider onto Moscow's rooftops, with only a laser sword and his uncanny ability to leap where mere mortals fear to tread as his protection. As he hacks and slashes his way through evil minions extra weapons can be collected.

Vicious guards, gun emplacements and robots among many others wear down the hero for the occasional tougher-still opponent and leave him vulnerable to the obligatory end-of-level horror. The first is original. You face a chamber filled with officials. Not very sinister, you may think, but they leap out of their seats and join up into a huge caterpillar to attack.

Next Strider finds himself in the Russian Steppes attacked by dogs preventing him from reaching an underground complex. Get through them and below awaits a huge robotic gorilla and mobile gun emplacements. Then, moving upwards, there's a hailstorm of parachuted bombs, skeletons of helicopters and a floating ship where guards, ballet dancers and gun turrets do their best to prevent you getting to level three.

In a lush jungle the pace becomes positively frenetic as you cope with boomerang-throwing wild women, jumping piranha fish and a couple of very nasty dinosaurs. Strider goes climbing trees in true Tarzan style and leaping from platform to platform with the grace of an

olympic gymnast. The end-of-level nasty is a BIG dinosaur spitting laser bolts at the unwary player.

With this out of the way Strider can concentrate on penetrating the defences of the Battleship Balrog, in the form of gun turrets and small but deadly robots. Once inside, the ship guards, mobile guns and a gigantic globe must be destroyed before reaching a Captain Hook lookalike complete with pegleg and nasty left hook — literally. Now the end of the journey is nigh.



Level five takes Strider to Lord Eurasia's base, and only when the final baddie has well and truly been beaten can Strider take a breather before doing it all over again.

Strider (originally titled Falcon) in the arcades is great, and the computer version is every bit as good. The main character is fast moving and able to perform damn near every acrobatic trick that the arcade original manages with seeming ease. Well done Tiertex, Strider is the stuff that swashbuckling epics are made of.



£9.99 cass, £14.99 disk

As fast and furious as the 16-bit games, Strider leaps around the screen with equal determination and acrobatic style, though lacking his slide movement (memory problem). The ingame tune manages to be good in comparison, despite the machine's obvious problem in competing with the 16-bit versions.



£19.99

Graphically terrific, Strider acts as if he's made of rubber — we still can't work out how he can do a double back flip and slice a baddie with his sword at the same time, though as most baddies are really mean we ain't complaining. Sound is equally impressive, with a wicked laugh when Strider's killed, and a pulse-pounding ingame tune that becomes sinister when end-of-level monsters appear.



£19.99

A stunning conversion from US Gold, maintaining the original's arcade feel to a tee, and only pipped at the post by the Amiga version a smidgeon in the graphics and sound.

OTHER FORMATS

Commodore and Spectrum versions (£9.99 cass, £14.99 disk) will be in the shops very soon.

Xybots



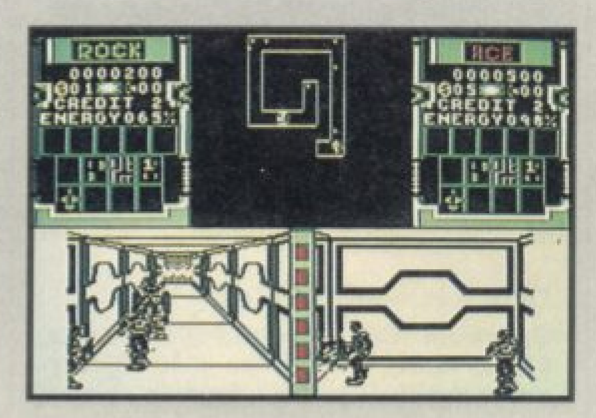
COMMODORE 64

■ TENGEN/DOMARK £9.99/£12.99 disk

Amstrad CPC 82%, Spectrum 87%, Atari ST 85%, Amiga 88% — TGM 021

Rock and Ace are back once again in this split-screen action-adventure to prove that they don't really mind their silly names, and kick the Xybots' butts once and for all. As with the other 8-bit versions monochromatic sprites rear their heads. It would have been better appreciated it if this version had been a bit more colourful. Luckily the original gameplay doesn't suffer too much from this oversight, and so C64 owners get fair treatment and a great game.

Machine update 82%



VERSION UPDATES

AMIGA

Jack Nicklaus's Greatest 18 Holes Of Major Championship Golf

ACCOLADE £24.95
C64 62%, PC 79% — TGM020

Despite a flattened head, the digitised Jack shown in-between holes is an attractive piece of presentation. The same can't be said for the game itself; graphic definition and animation are merely that of a carefully designed C64 or Amstrad game and the scenery graphics are drawn slowly and tiringly. Sound highlight is the atmospheric polite applause from the crowd.

TGM update 60%

AMIGA

Sleeping Gods Lie

EMPIRE £24.95
Atari ST 76% — TGM021



The neat psuedo-Freescape 3-D of this huge and challenging arcade adventure is the same as that of the ST — it's a shame that more detail hasn't been added to the graphics and that code hasn't been optimised for faster screen update. Sound is enhanced with groans and screams from injured characters and a great sounding piece of music to accompany the story book intro. Skilled arcade RPGers apply here.

Machine update 77%

AMIGA

Chariots Of Wrath

IMPRESSIONS £24.99
Atari ST 77% —TGM022

Similar to the ST version, the playing area is wider, which unfortunately makes some graphics look blocky. However, the vertical blaster doesn't suffer from this, with equally impressive graphics and better movement — unlike the ST, things move more or less at full speed even when there are many objects onscreen. The time limit on the platform section is more lenient, helping the overall playability of the package. A well above-average shoot-'em-up, with sub-games to improve value — play it!

Machine Update 79%

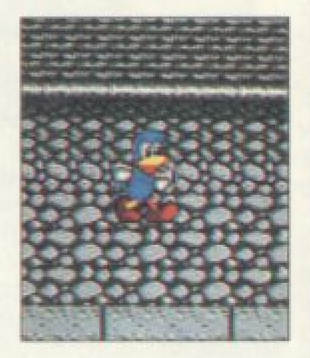




Are this daring duo quackers?

DYNAMITE DUX

Activision



Sega's strong reputation for excellent arcade games has luckily been complemented by mostly high quality conversions. Dynamite Dux is another winner, in which the major moan is that we were too busy laughing at the hilarious looking meanies to move out of their way in time.

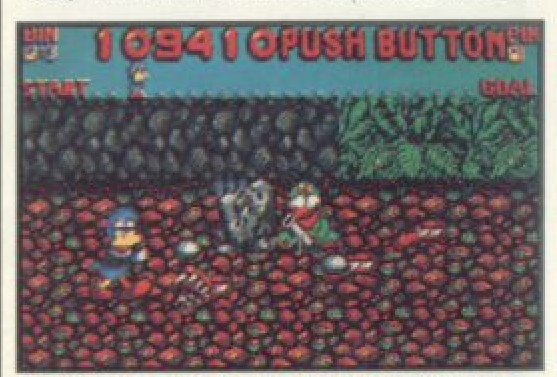
Din and Tin are two cute ducks, pets of a little girl called Lucy. One day our heroes are playing in the garden with Lucy when a nasty old wizard called Achacha kidnaps poor old Luce. The dynamic duo are a mite peeved at this and set off on a six-level journey to rescue their friend.

The first level sees Din (or Din and Tin in two-player mode) strolling down a street. Before long the baddies appear. These are some of the weirdest creatures ever seen in a legal state of mind, including rabbits on springs, skateboarding mice, pogostick-bouncing crocodiles and homing missile-wielding foxes.

You start weaponless but with a three-strength pugilist tendencies depending on how long the fire button is held — the longer it's held the larger your fist and the stronger the biff. However there are weapons to be found along the way. Guns, flame throwers, water pistols, rocks and homing missile launchers appear from time to time to be collected.

Meanie contact knocks down your energy bar, but picking up pieces of food renews it, while treasure chests bestow points bonuses on the lucky player to grab them, ranging between ten and 10,000 points (you can't tell what's inside till you open them).

Big fatties make their presence felt throughout the game, appearing midway in a level and also at the end — a useful tripometer warns how far into a level you are. Most are tough to beat, but watch out for appropriate weapons to use; for instance the water cannon douses the flame monster. Sooner or later you find yourself at the end of the sixth and final level fighting with the last big nasty — a real bitch, make no mistake — and to save Lucy he must be stomped into the ground.
MC



K-wacky fun 'n' games up and down the ST streets with the dynamic duo







£19.99



With the comic style characters and tough opponents, Dynamite Dux takes the typical whacky Japanese mentality and creates a playable ST product. The colourful and detailed graphics are particularly impressive — especially if you thought you had seen some weird creatures in The New Zealand Story. A fine, humorous biff-'em-up, but perhaps the long-term playability is doubtful.

OTHER FORMATS

Spectrum, C64, Amstrad (£9.99 cass, £14.99 disk) and Amiga (£19.99) versions available mid-September.



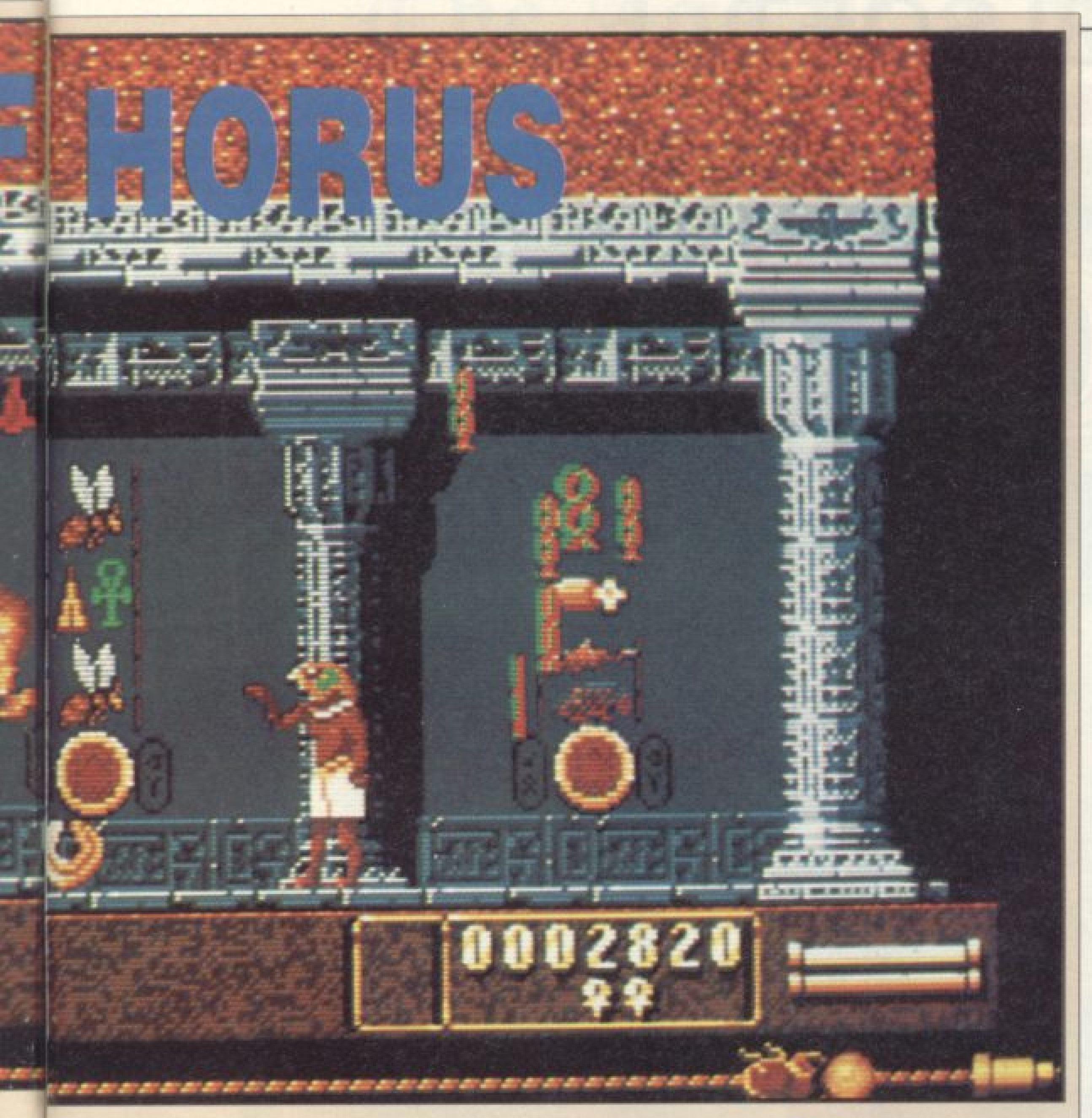
Egyptian mythology has it that many æons before the rise of mankind Gods ruled the world. Osiris was wise but his half-brother Set was evil, envying Osiris's position. Somehow Set forced Osiris into a chest and pushed it off down the river Nile. Osiris's wife Isis found the body of her dying king and apparently 'in their closeness' a son, Horus, was born.

Set discovered that Osiris's body had been found and tore it into seven pieces. Horus swore vengeance on Set, while his mother tried to find the body of her king so that he could be buried with dignity.

Both of them succeeded in their tasks. Set died and Osiris took his place in heaven. We now move forward a few thousand years to the tomb of an unknown king... The dead buried in the tomb waited many millennia for their God to take their souls to heaven because when it was built although many murals were painted the final one telling of Osiris's murder and Horus's birth was missing. This spelt loadsa trouble so Osiris decided to breath life into the wall paintings and let the battle be fought again.

Set has torn the body of the unknown king into seven pieces and scattered it about giving Horus two jobs: find the body and return it to the burial chamber and kill Set.

There are four sections to the tomb, although they can only be entered by the discovery of colour-coded keys. As Horus is searching the many chambers of the tomb



Hire-a-glypic and bring it to life: mummies and daddies needn't apply the Eye of Horus

he's attacked by various creatures depicted on the wall paintings. Initially armed with only papyrus darts, during the course of his adventures a variety of weapons can be collected to help him.

Amulets with magical names such as Amulet of the Heart, Amulet of the Sam, Amulet of the Soul and Amulet of the Pillow can also be picked up and used. As each item is collected it's displayed in the status panel at the bottom of the screen, along with the energy level (represented by a scarab beetle) and the number of lives (represented by ankhs).

Being a God our lad has two modes of transport — human form and a hawk, although if the meanies hit him in either form he dies just the same.

When a piece of body is discovered (only one piece can be carried at a time) Horus takes it back to the burial chamber, and only when all seven pieces have been discovered and reunited can Set be faced for the final time.

Eye Of Horus is a great game for arcade/strategy fans, and mapping is definitely a must because there are plenty of chambers for the unwary player to get lost in. Those not so keen on the game type may find the wandering around a little tedious, but if you like puzzle solving it's certainly worth more than a cursory look.

MC



ATARI ST **75%**

£24.99

Graphically Eye Of Horus is very good, especially the backgrounds which are filled with very pretty hieroglyphics. Sound is also well represented by an atmospheric Egyptian composition by music maestro David Whittaker. At the end of the day we reckon that EyeOf Horus will appeal to puzzle fans more than we zappers.

OTHER FORMATS

Amiga (£24.99), PC (£29.99) and C64 (£8.99 cass, £12.99 disk)versions will be available in late September.

VERSION UPDATES

AMIGA

Red Heat

OCEAN £24.99
Spectrum 52%, C64 50% — TGM021



Austria's favourite action man is back this time as Ivan Danko, a top Russian cop on the trail of the obligatory bunch of baddies. Graphically Red Heat looks good, with a a nicely animated Arnie sprite bopping, head butting and shooting (when he finds a gun) the variety of bad guys and gals out to stamp his card. Mr Schwarzenegger always saves the day in his celluloid escapades, and this game's no different. If you like bash-'em-ups take a look at Red Heat, not exactly distinguished by what makes it different, but playable nonetheless.

Machine update 69%

AMIGA ■ AMSTRAD CPC ■ SPECTRUM ■ COMMODORE 64

Mr Heli

FIREBIRD Amiga £24.99, 8-bits £9.99
Atari ST 65% — TGM022

The Amiga's graphically identical to the ST, right down to the jerky scrolling, and slight sound improvement, including a realistic rotor sound. In general feel and look, the CPC, also, is close to the ST. Though blocky, the colourful Mode 2 graphics are bright and well shaded. Scrolling is smoother and distinctly faster than on the 16-bits, and music is close to the jolly ST.

Spectrum: a few colours on the status panel but the playing area is monochrome. Some of the graphics are blocky and all use very scruffy shading; generally ugly to the eye, despite reasonable scrolling. On the Commodore, though a little lacking in colour and detail, back-



grounds are good and scrolling is smooth. Sprites are excellent, coloured and shaded cleverly. Title music is jazzy and jovial, effects are smart, and above all, the game plays well. It's far from easy but the difficulty is set as a challenge rather than a frustration.

Machine update: Amiga 64%
Amstrad CPC 68%
Spectrum 61%
Commodore 64/128 76%

UBI SOFT presents

IRON LORD



The Age of Chivalry



Switch on the afterburner and blow

FIRST STRIKE

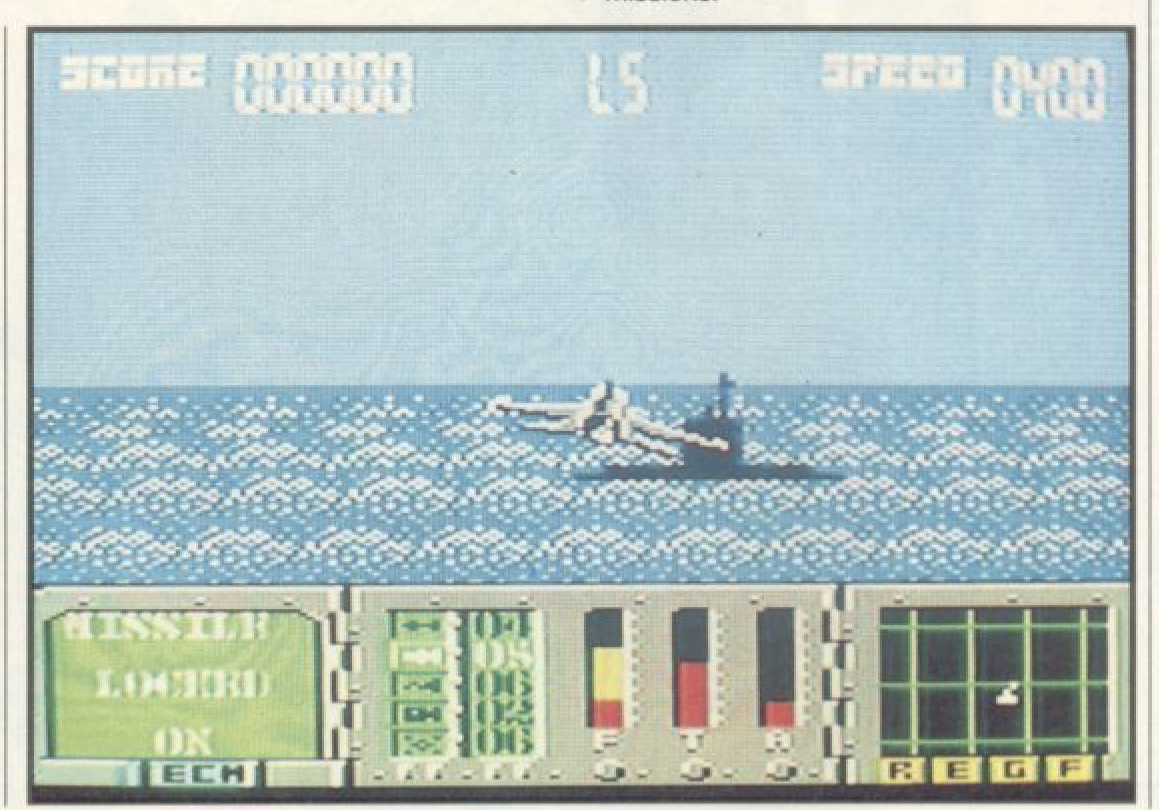
Elite

As the title suggests you only have one chance in a first strike situation, and it's as a young and very green trainee pilot that you appear in Elite's First Strike. But fear not, this isn't one of those snooze-along-a-multi-paged-flight-manual jobs; it's a fast-moving arcade shoot-'em-up in the Afterburner mould, with seven missions for you to risk your butt on plus a training mission.

First pick a mission. These have a primary target which must be destroyed (except on the training mission) in order to complete them. Targets include a chemical weapons plant, an important oil refinery and an experimental nuclear submarine. Each mission takes place around the globe in such holiday spots as Russia, Turkey and Norway, but the problem is how to get there. Voila, an F-16 is taxied onto the runway and awaits your choice of weaponry.

Sidewinder and Maverick missiles, cannon shells and Mk 84 bombs are the offensive weapons on offer. Defensive measures are provided by ECM radar jamming pods and flares. 10,000lbs is the weight limit for supplies, so make sure you have everything you're likely to need, as there can be no 'I wish I'd picked up that extra cluster of Mavericks' when you're in a dog fight.

In training mode (best choice for getting the feel of the game) the targets are harmless and act as sitting ducks. At the end of this mission you're informed of your percentage of hits rating, and when this is suitably high it's time to tackle one of the other missions.



● **SPECIAL UPDATE** ●

Revenge of the Japanese B-movie

AAARGH

Melbourne House

■ **Atari ST £19.99, C64 and Spectrum £9.99 cass,£14.99 disk**

Based on those those brilliantly tacky Japanese monster movies starring such wonders as Godzilla, this first came out on the Amiga yonks ago, so technically it's an update, but long ago enough to make it a review as well... You are offered the choice of playing one of two monsters andhaving a stompingly good time with the hapless inhabitants of anotherwise peaceful island. These large beasts are a green Dragon and a nasty Ogre (a friend can optionally take the part of the other character), and they have a mission — a quest to gain the legendary golden Roc egg.

To get it, though, five lesser eggs must first be collected by stomping, ripping and chomping your way through 12 scattered cities scattered where the eggs are hidden. At the start only two cities can be visited, so pick one and go to it. As you mangle the buildings the puny humans wheel out a variety of weapons with which to try and dent your hide. Besides the humans there are hornets which zoom at you, as well as other monsters.

Depending on which monster you have chosen to play you can whack the humans' catapults or torch buildings with your fiery breath. Contact with any dangers knocks down your health meter, but itcan be topped up by crushing buildings and grabbing any food found inside — or the odd tasty human will do just as well.

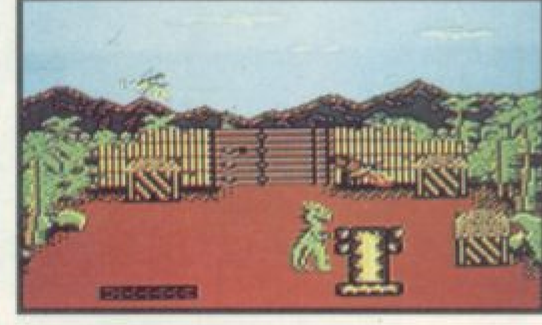
Keep an eye on the power meter too, which tells you how much barbecue breath is left; the lightning icons provide a top up of fuel when found.

When an egg is found you take it back to your cave, but discover your rival is ready to fight you for it. When five eggs have been hoarded in this way, you can go to the volcano and attempt to claim the gold-

ATARI ST 77%

This features nicely drawn and animated monsters, although the sound is a bit of a let down. On the title screen the tune is a strange metallic sounding composition that grates on the ears after a while. In game sound is limited to a few crunch, bang,tinkle effects and the monster announcing each find in a gutteral voice for blind players.





Out a while on the Amiga, monsters are spreading to other machines...

C64/128 58%

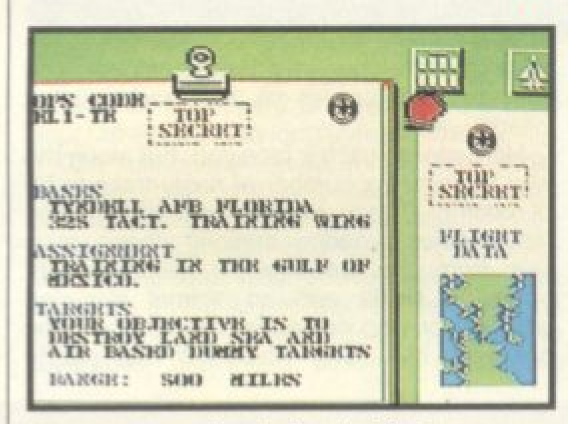
Unfortunately you can only play solo on the C64 version, and to be truthful this kills the whole damn point of the game. The difficulty level seems to be set way too high, because it's almost impossible to reach the second level without lots of practice.

OTHER FORMATS

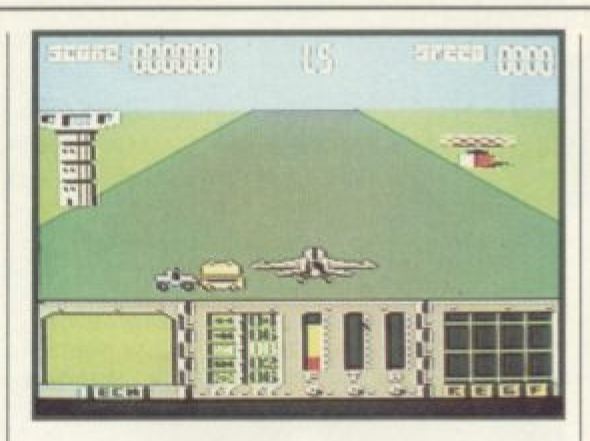
A PC version should be in the shops priced £24.99 by the time you read this.

In these the enemy really are vicious and lob everything at their disposal in your direction. The aggressive forces include tanks, SAM missile sites and helicopter gunships. Every so often you come upon a friendly air base where the plane lands automatically (thus saving you a couple of lives because you usually end up buried in the tarmac), and refuelling and rearming takes place.

Afterburner when it appeared on the C64 was sadly less than satisfactory, now we have First Strike which is similar but much more playable. The amount of missions adds to long-term playability, and in the air the F-16 with its devastating arsenal blows all opposition out of the skies. Blast-'em-up fans will no doubt love First Strike, take a look. **WL**



In some respects similar to Afterburner, First Strike is much more playable and a better prospect for blast-'em-up fans





£9.99 cass, £11.99 disk

The fast and furious pace instantly drags you into the game, and although the graphics are a little on the blocky side they zip around the screen smoothly. Sound is good with a nice tune on the intro screen and appropriate ingame sound effects. Simulation fans may not approve the lack of reading material, but the rest of us should enjoy it greatly.

OTHER FORMATS

No other formats planned

VERSION UPDATES

COMMODORE 64/128

Hostages

INFOGRAMES £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk
Atari ST 77% — TGM013, Amiga 78%
PC 71% — TGM017

The introductory sequence isn't encouraging. An adequate depiction of the Embassy is passed by a very, very blocky and expanded car sprite. All is well in the game, thankfully. Although still on the blocky side, sprites are effective and move well and dramatically. Scrolling is iffy in places and the repetitive backing music is less than thrilling, but the SAS-style gameplay is as exciting and fun as ever.

Machine update 74%

SPECTRUM 55%

Small ill-defined sprites hobble around vile backgrounds, while a variety of meanies attack without mercy. As you can probably tell we aren't too keen on the Spectrum version, this is mainly because the horrid background colours make the monsters virtually invisible. In consequence this makes the game almost impossible to play.



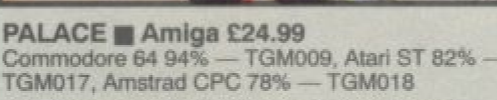
en egg from its summit, then perhaps the humans can live in peace.

Very Rampage and Muncher-ish in its content, we loved this rip,mangle and maim game. Aaargh is instantly playable and contains enough monsterish mayhem to keep all Godzilla fans happy. The path to the golden egg is fraught with dangers, but we think that Aaargh will keep you playing to the end (and saying that word many times in the process). **MC**

Barbarian II

The Games Machine STAR UPDATE





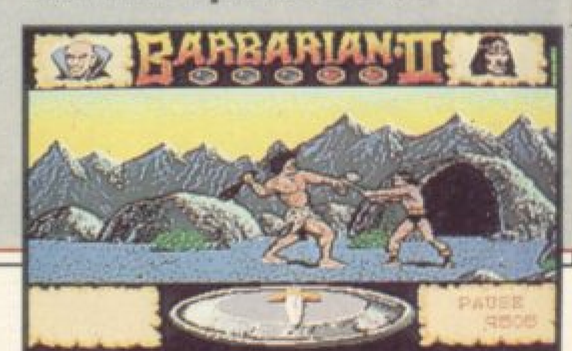
PALACE ■ Amiga £24.99
Commodore 64 94% — TGM009, Atari ST 82% — TGM017, Amstrad CPC 78% — TGM018

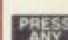
The Dungeons Of Drax are finally reproduced on Commodore's 16-bit machine, more than a year on from the much acclaimed C64 original. Amiga graphics are as near to the ST version as makes no difference, as are the sonics.

The only real difference is the clever intro. A skeletal hand tears through the title screen and beckons the player to 'Follow me!', and a dramatic bassy melody bursts forth. After the character has been selected (the Barbarian or Princess Mariana), the hand returns, holding a disk ('Insert disk two!', the voice drawls), and the view shifts to a maniacally laughing skull.

Simple, direct hack-and-slay action mixed with maze navigation, Barbarian II is as fun on the Amiga as on any other format.

Machine update 82%





...And this time he's bringing his elephant

TUSKER

System 3

With the imminent extinction of the African elephant constantly in the news lately, you could be forgiven for thinking System 3's long-gestated game may be jumping on the green eco-bandwaggon, but the Tusker of the title only figures as being already extinct and in his graveyard.

Like our hero, his dad's a bit of an explorer himself, but he's disappeared out in Africa somewhere while on an expedition (sound a bit familiar?). You decide to search the attic for clues to his possible your whereabouts, and in a chest you discover the answer. The fabled Elephants Graveyard is where he was heading, so you decide in the best exploring traditions to follow in his footsteps and find it.

The game starts with you in the middle of the desert, and first order of the day is to find a weapon because the natives aren't too friendly. Daggers, stones and a gun (when ammo is found) all aid in your quest to avoid feed the vultures, but watch it when you do have the gun because the natives become very vicious. Other objects are to be found, though it's up to you to decide what may be useful on your quest, so for the first few games collect everything you can lay your hands on.

Next thing is to rummage around and find clues in a spooky underground cave populated by vicious snakes, a hungry crocodile and other assorted brown trouser-inducing creatures including a giant praying mantis. Then with a swipe of the machete you should have picked up, a trip into the jungle is in order. But all is not peaceful even in its relative protection: large warthogs thunder toward you and knock your energy level down if you don't leap nimbly out of their, not helped by monkeys lobbing various projectiles at you from the trees and dinosaurs thundering about.

Dinosaurs? Yes, it's here you realise things aren't quite as they seem, especially when cavemen appear armed with large bone clubs and whack you round the head. But there's no time to ponder and you must continue to battle your way through minions and brain-teasing puzzles till you reach a tribal village.

Here more puzzles face you, but along the way there are a number of nasty traps to be overcome. These include acid tear-lobbing totem poles, voodoo minions (these guys rise from the dead when disposed of), bouncing skulls and an animal skin-clad witchdoctor who demands respect when you approach him. Only when the final puzzle

C.64/128
85%

£9.99 cass, £14.99 disk

The puzzles are tough, the various denizens carry out their duties with great zeal and the hero is invariably left wondering what the heck is going on. We particularly like the fact that you are free to wander where you please and do whatever you want (within reason of course). Tusker is a good example of the arcade/adventure-type game that every budding explorer should consider purchasing.

Anything else just isn't tennis

GREAT COURTS

Ubi Soft

If you still haven't recovered from paying exorbitant prices for three strawberries and a spot of cream at Wimbledon and drinking little else on long summer afternoons than barley water, you can trust software houses to continue the mood. Imageworks have the original plan view of Sega's coin-op, Passing Shot, and here French house Ubi Soft show the traditional behind-and-above-the-player angle.

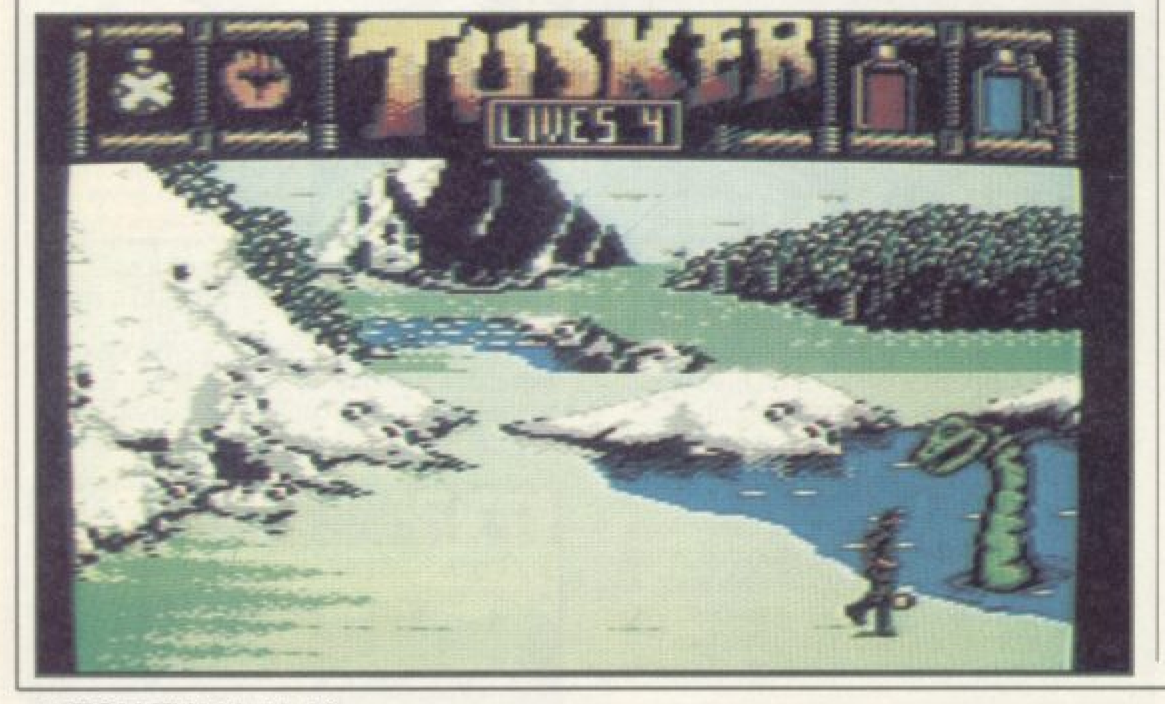
Can you drag yourself from 64th in the world to become tennis champion? Ubi Soft certainly provide all the options

One of three skill levels set, three training options are available. When practising against another human player, as in all parts of the game, a cross on the court marks the best position from which to return a shot. This is certainly useful against the training machine, which churns out an endless flow of balls (or at least until you press ESCape) in a pattern determined by the program selected from the six available.

Serving gets its own training section. A press of the fire button begins the serve and a yellow X moves swiftly over the court, guided by the player. As the racket makes contact with the ball, the X marks the spot (of course) upon which the ball will bounce.

The Great Courts are those of the Paris Open, Wimbledon, Flushing Meadows and, to begin with, the Melbourne Open. Beginning competition against a low-ranking (but still talented) player in the first rounds of the Australian championship, as matches are won and lost, the player makes his way up the rankings. The game in progress and the current rankings may be saved out for later use.

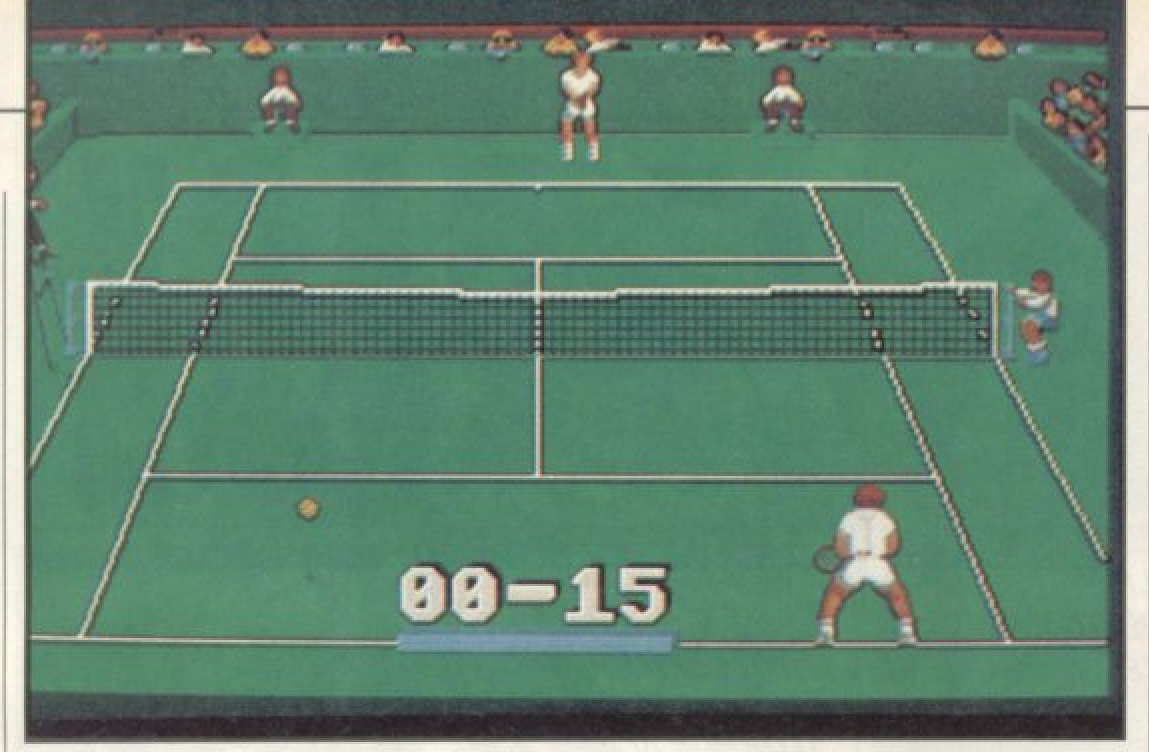
Starting 64th in the world, it'll be a while before you drag yourself up from the bottom of the table: Great Courts is VERY challenging. It's a fast-paced game, so much so that the computer sends you sprawling all over the court just trying to get in the general region of the high-velocity





£24.99

The court is clearly laid out, colour used nicely in the crowd to liven up the screen. Although the sprites aren't packed with detail, they're smooth and cartoon-like, generally animated well and, other than some crab-like sidling, realistically. The occasional and apparently random replay option is most impressive — a court graphic rotates smoothly in 3-D as the ball bounces between unseen competitors. Music and jingles are unremarkable but the sampled sound effects are excellent and add atmosphere to the proceedings.



has been solved can you finally reach the Elephants' Graveyard and retrieve the prize your father spent so long trying to find.

C64 Tusker looks good, with a nice 'ethnic' feel to the graphics. As usual with arcade/strategy games a few attempts are required to gain your bearings, and once you have some idea what you're doing the task becomes a little easier. But rest assured that it will take many weeks to finally discover the Elephants' Graveyard. In short a playable arcade/strategy game that sadly just falls short of a Star Player accolade, this is the sort of game Indiana Jones should have been. **MC**

OTHER FORMATS
The Spectrum and Amstrad CPC versions (£9.99 cass, £14.99 disk), along with the 16-bits (price TBA) should be in the shops as you read this.

ball — and that against a computer player ranked just 53rd! Successful returns require good stroke timing as it's very easy to swing too early, and mistimed hit is likely to send the ball flying off the court at a penalty-invoking angle.

Tennis is a little-seen 16-bit sport and this digitisation shows how it should be done. The position marker helps a lot and, like the serving X cursor, is a great idea. Despite its difficulty and the very real need to practise before progression, Great Courts is undeniably playable and soon imbibes a strong, almost agressive desire to beat the computer. If you have any interest in tennis, this is the game to watch out for. **WL**

OTHER FORMATS
ST (£19.99), PC (£24.99) and C64 (£9.99 cass, £14.99 disk) to follow in the autumn.

The New Zealand Story



ATARI ST ■ COMMODORE 64 ■ SPECTRUM
OCEAN £19.99 (ST), £8.99 cass, £14.99 disk (Spec), £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk (C64)
Amiga 90% — TGM022

Graphically identical to the Amiga version, The New Zealand Story on the ST differs only in the quailty of sound effects, though the slightly tinny tune detracts very little from the sheer playability of this arcade-perfect conversion.

The Spectrum's sprites are monochromatic, and the beautiful backdrops that graced the 16-bit versions are understandably missing. On the other hand Ocean have excelled themselves with the sprites, and they compare very well with those displayed in 16-bit.

It's the Commodore 64 version which suffers most in comparison. The game is colourful enough, but the sprites are often indistinct and look very little like the characters they're supposed to represent. Gameplay, however, remains high and C64 players shouldn't feel let down overall.

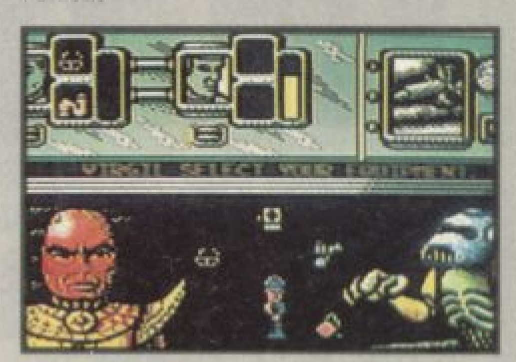
Machine update: Atari ST 89%
Commodore 64 82%
Spectrum 85%



Tiki and friends chase around Auckland in Ocean's mega-hit from down under on the ST

VERSION UPDATES

COMMODORE 64 ■ AMSTRAD CPC
Thunderbirds
GRANDSLAM £12.95 cass, £14.95 disk
Spectrum 85%, Atari ST 87%, Amiga 87% — TGM020



The C64 International Rescue team of Scott, Virgil, Brains et al happily tackle four decidedly blocky missions. Despite this, the colourful sprites move in a fun, pleasing, puppet-like manner and backgrounds serve their humble purpose. While the same can be said, in general, for the Amstrad, its graphics are close to the reasonably detailed but colour-restricted Spectrum, with a barely extended colour palette. On both machines, passable music and crude spot effects are a disappointment (particularly with the barely used Spectrum-like CPC sounds) but gameplay is as good as ever.

Machine update: C64/128 84%
Amstrad CPC 80%

AMIGA
Trivial Pursuit
DOMARK £24.99
Although we've covered A New Beginning, the second Trivial Pursuit game, the original is so old that it came before TGM's time! The Amiga is so far behind it makes us wonder why Domark bothered. Though the actual board is clearly drawn, the host, `TP' (an irritating little `person'), is a blocky, amateurish sprite, and the two backgrounds he asks questions against are very loosely designed. A few spot effects and extremely poor tunes form the soundtrack. Amongst friends, Trivial Pursuit can be the source of great amusement but it's a lot simpler and more involving to use the actual board game rather than a pale pixel imitation.

Machine update: 50%

CAPTAIN LIGHT V DARK DESTROYER

DARK DESTROYER, THE FIEND WITH A **SEVERE** PERSONALITY PROBLEM IS TRYING TO DESTROY **ALL** THE GAMES SOFTWARE IN THE CITY.....



Y'WANNA PLAY GAMES SUCKERS? **HAW! HAW! HAW!** NO MORE FUN MEATHEADS!

HOLD IT RIGHT THERE **SCREWBALL!**

CAPTAIN LIGHT YOU BRAINLESS **WIMP!**

SO IT WAS A BIT **BELOW** THE BELT, WHO CARES? ONLY TROUBLE IS, HE'S DESTROYED ALL THE GAMES SOFTWARE



HEY, **WAIT** A SECOND THERE MIGHT BE ONE GLIMMER OF HOPE...

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GMM

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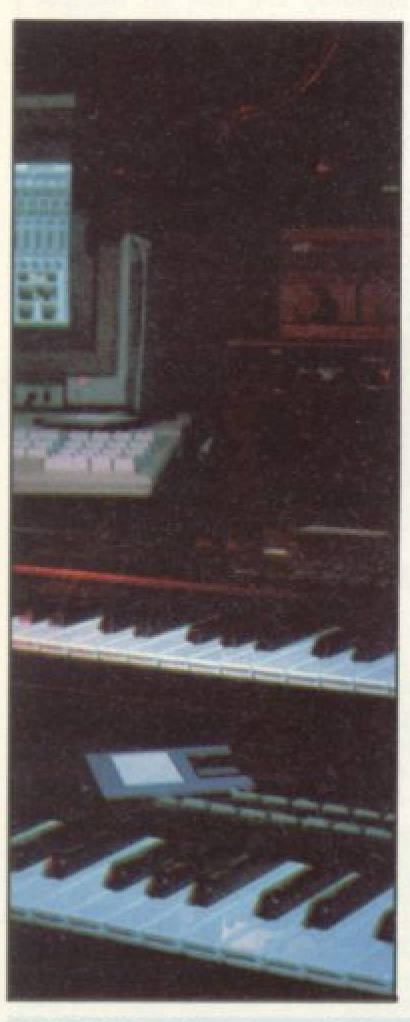
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The Games machine

NEXT MONTH



■ COMPOSE YOUR OWN MUSIC

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■ WHERE IS THE MONEY?

In a TGM Special Report we expose the pricing of software. Where does the money go? Why are some games up to £10 more than others. Why is there such a price difference between 8- and 16-bit machines — when, usually, the only difference is the price of a disk! Do 16-bit games really take longer to develop? Are prices to drop soon? TGM goes undercover in the software industry and digs up the dirt on over-pricing.

■ THE ARCH IS BACK!

You can now pick up the much-acclaimed Acorn Archimedes for a mere £650 (yes, ONLY £650!). Due to its recent price drop, Britain's mainstream software houses are taking a good, hard look at this wonderbeast. At a recent developers' launch the Archie was received with open arms. At last, a real alternative to the Amiga and ST? TGM looks at the prospects for the A3000 — this time it really could take off!

■ PLUS more features, more previews, more reviews and all the news that you need to know.

Next issue ON SALE OCTOBER 12

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SOFTWARE SNAX

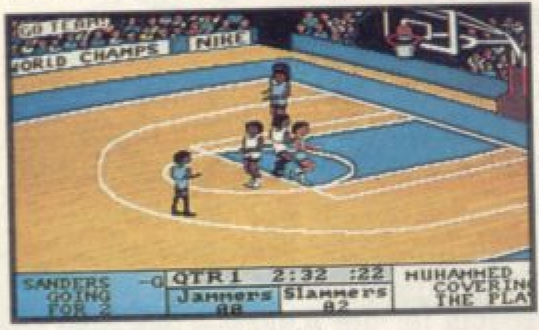
FAST BREAK

Accolade ■ Amiga £24.95

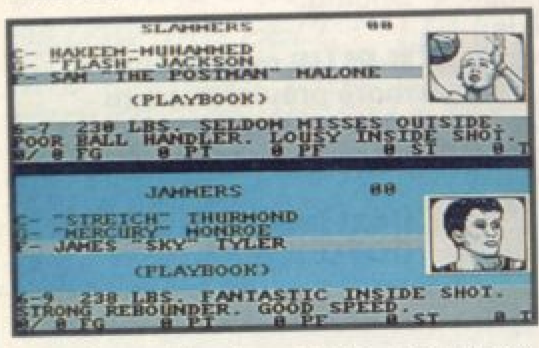
As well as describing Jimmy White's snooker technique, a fast break is a defensive term in basketball. In a three-a-side game, as this game simulates, it's where two players break (run) toward the centre of the court while their team member hopefully catches the rebound of a failed opponent's shot at basket.

If you didn't know that already (who does?) this may not be the game for you. An integral part of the game is the selection of defensive plays (pre-planned movement sequences for the team) from a choice of five. There are also 14 set offensive plays — including such delightfully named moves as Give 'N' Go, Reverse Cut and Ally-Oop — plus a custom play created by the player.

The teams — the Slammers and the Jammers — are human- or computer-controlled to give two- or one-player matches.



They may not be the Harlem Globetrotters but with a careful eye on their statistics you'll be able to form a skilled squad



The player directly controls one basketballer while the computer sets the positions of the other team members — when an offensive or defensive play is called their moves are that of the chosen sequence.

An angled view of the court is given which flips to show the other end when necessary; because of the viewpoints, a triangular section in the middle of the court effectively doesn't exist, stranded somewhere in the screen-flip void. At least the court's clearly drawn: the sprites are mediocre — round, childish heads and square jack-booted legs — and their animation is unrealistic, with few frames of animation. Audio is a small selection of drab samples.

The defensive/offensive plays, at least a little confusing to all but basketball afficionados, will put off the average arcade game player. The arcade gameplay itself is a touch awkward and, more importantly, rather boring and uninvolving, but a two-player game can generate enthusiasm between friends.

For all but those interested in the theory and practice of 'plays', Fast Break is best avoided.

WL

Machine rating 57%

ROLL-OUT

EAS Software/Procovision ■ Amiga £19.99

Set on the planet of Smiles, this clearly isn't quite the most serious release you're likely to find this month. The sleeping inhabitants are Acid House smiley faces (surprise, surprise) and are blissfully unaware of their impending doom: a meteor is on a collision course with their home.

Enter an amorphous green explorer called Rolly. He can save the smileys by pushing them into happily common escape hatches. However, the rounded yellow creatures roll until they hit another object, so it's easy for them to slide past a hatch and/or get stuck in an inaccessable position. Rolly



Acieeeeed!! There aren't any dubious substances involved in Roll-out but its puzzles are equally mind-bending



can destroy blocks — if he has at least 50 points — or shift them around to help rescue smileys. Moving blocks also temporarily eliminate any of the four meanies who follow Rolly around Smiles's 50 levels.

'Bright and jolly' is the best way to describe the clear but simplistic graphics. Rolly's a brilliant little sprite; his antennae wiggle and his tongue flaps as he lollops along, and standing still has an excited, eager expression on his face — or an exhausted one if he's been pushing too many blocks! Audio backing is a choice between some nice samples and a happy, lively piece of music with great sounds.

Following Leonardo last month, Roll-out is another Xor/Pengo-type game, this time the target being exits rather than the gathering of the objects. In theory, it's difficult to say which game presents the greater challenge, but in practice Roll-out gets too hard too soon. Level one is stupidly easy then level two involves much head scratching. With a time limit and no continue-play, it soon generates frustration and becomes unworthy of effort. **WL**

Machine rating 67%

BLACK MAGIC

EAS/Procovision ■ Amiga £19.99

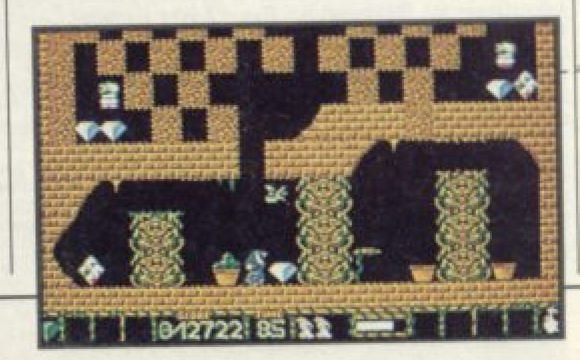
The year is 1402, the place is the kingdom of Urus, a quiet and prosperous land. Or rather it was until the day the wicked sorcerer Terius thundered in with his minions to plunder the kingdom's wealth, which he hid in 70 locations. The only hope of counter attacking is Venzius, Urus's most famous sorcerer.

Each level is split into the upper and underworlds, with two ways to complete each level. The first is to collect all the diamonds spread across the playing area, depositing them in baskets scattered around (you can only carry four gems at a time). Or you could try your hand at destroying the variety of minions inhabiting the above ground platforms and subterranean caves (once you've found a weapon).

Helpful items include shovels for underground digging, a safety screen (sort of smoke screen), shot power, special shot (these rebound off of obstacles) and lightning. When a weapon is picked up an energy bar in the status panel appears, as the current weapon is fired this bar diminishes, though collecting the strawberries scattered around repenishes this.

When either one, or both tasks are completed on each screen the sorcerer turns green, informing you that the exit should now be found. A pleasant tune plays throughout Black Magic, and although graphically the game isn't any great shakes, it's pretty playable. As with most games governed by a timer a touch of the old angst sets in, but take a look you might like it. **MC**

Machine rating 59%

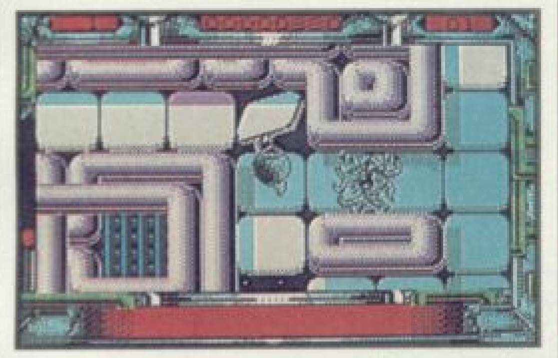


MAZEMANIA

Hewson ■ Spectrum £9.99

From the title and the fact that the hero is round and frivolously named Flippo, it's clear that this is another jolly little game inspired by Pac-Man. Here it's mixed with the Crazy Painter/Amidar theme; the tiles making up each maze corridor show a different colour as Flippo automatically flips them as he passes by.

The obligatory hero-chasing bad guys make Flippo's job a challenge but he can leap over their hapless heads with a well-timed single bound and pick up speed-inducing icons to show them a clean pair of heels. Jumps are also necessary to cross



black holes and starry voids otherwise liable to take one of Flippo's lives.

After level one — Tubular Bells — is completed by flipping all its tiles, level two (The Vegetable Garden) can be directly accessed in subsequent games with use of Mazemania's password system.

There's a pleasant ditty on the options page but it's the preceding loading screen which is more indicative of the game. Like the screen and maze borders of the game, it uses several colours, restraining themselves within character blocks, and the Spectrums bright colour command. The result is a patchwork quilt of unsavoury palette that can displease and distract the eye in mid-game. On the plus side, four-way scrolling is both fast and smooth and busy sound effects help gameplay.

The game concept certainly needs helping along: Skweek (TGM021) was too simplistic for recommendation and Mazemania is nothing more than a cut-down version of that recent US Gold release. Old-fashioned and limited gameplay — just a matter of dodge and jump — this is much better suited to a budget price tag. **WL**

Machine rating 46%

PAPERBOY

Elite ■ Amiga, Atari ST £19.99

Eons ago Elite had this once-popular coin-op out for 8-bit machines, now 16-bit owners can sling newspapers through people's windows, run over household pets etc. The game starts with our bicycling hero happily starting his round on a Monday morning. There are a choice of three difficulty levels — easy street, medium street (double points) and hard street (treble points).

Earning extra points isn't simple because as you ride along your chosen street a variety of objects animate and inanimate obstruct your way (and of course more are added on harder levels). These include cars, dogs, radio controlled vehicles, workmen and lawnmowers, and when you hit them (or more frequently they hit you) one of your six lives vanishes. The aim's simple: deliver papers to all the houses along the street. Either throw them into the mailboxes, or if there isn't one, aim for the doorstep. You start the game with a limited amount of



Pedal-pushing coin-op of yester-year



newspapers, but once these have been lobbed piles can be picked up from the pavement to build up stocks. At the end of the street is an off-road track where a timer ticks down as you peddle like mad and throw newspapers at various targets. Complete this and bonus points are awarded, though if you fail all you lose is the bonus. Paperboy on both machines remains playable, although graphically and sonically the Amiga version is superior, but the question is why bring a 16-bit game out so long after the other versions, and so long since the arcade game has vanished. **MC**

Machine rating: Amiga 68%
Atari ST 66%

SHUFFLEPUCK CAFE

Broderbund ■ Amiga £19.99

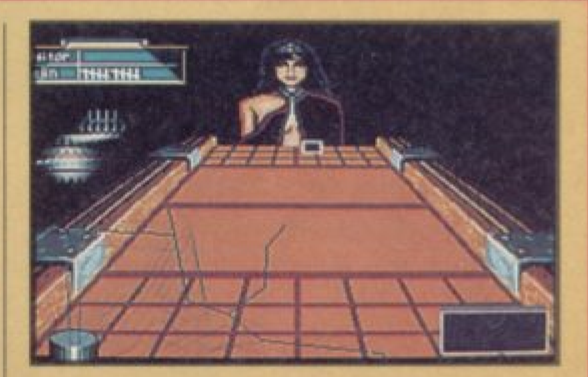
The seaside piers of times past. A large table, with a metal top. Probably the best arcade game of all time, air was blown through holes in the surface to provide a low-friction cushion upon which a flat, circular puck glided. A squat rounded bat for both players to slide against the table to hit the puck, sending it bouncing around the table at high, eye-blurring speed, and a fabulously playable and highly addicitive game was formed. Ah, those were the days.

Shufflepuck Cafe is a computerisation of that tactile table sport, but set in a freakish diner, reminiscent of the Mos Eisley cantina in Star Wars. It's possible to practise indefinitely against any of ten opponents, but the aim is to defeat increasingly skilled players in the Shufflepuck tournament.



Viewed from your end, the table is displayed in forced perspective and the mouse moves the bat. The bat's size and response can be customised via menus, as can a 'blocker,' which moves along the centre-line of the table and makes things trickier for both players.

Though a touch crude in definition, the motley collection of aliens you face across the table are amusing, blinking and twitching and giving various sampled utterances in response to a conceded point.



Above: score keeper droid rushes to chalk up another point scored by telekinetic, Bejin, while on the left, some of the motley crew of the café indicate the kind of atmosphere to expect...

Like the 'real' game it's based upon, Shufflepuck Cafe has instant appeal and is readily playable. However, it's initial attraction due to its simplicity also proves to be its downfall. Opponents vary in difficulty from tediously easy to utterly impossible, but with such tight player limitations and no two-player option, Shufflepuck Cafe is destined to spend most of its life gathering dust. **WL**

Machine rating 70%

BATMAN is a shadow in the darkness, as elusive as a dream. High above the seamy streets of GOTHAM, he is a criminal's nightmare. The only hope for a desperate city – BATMAN.











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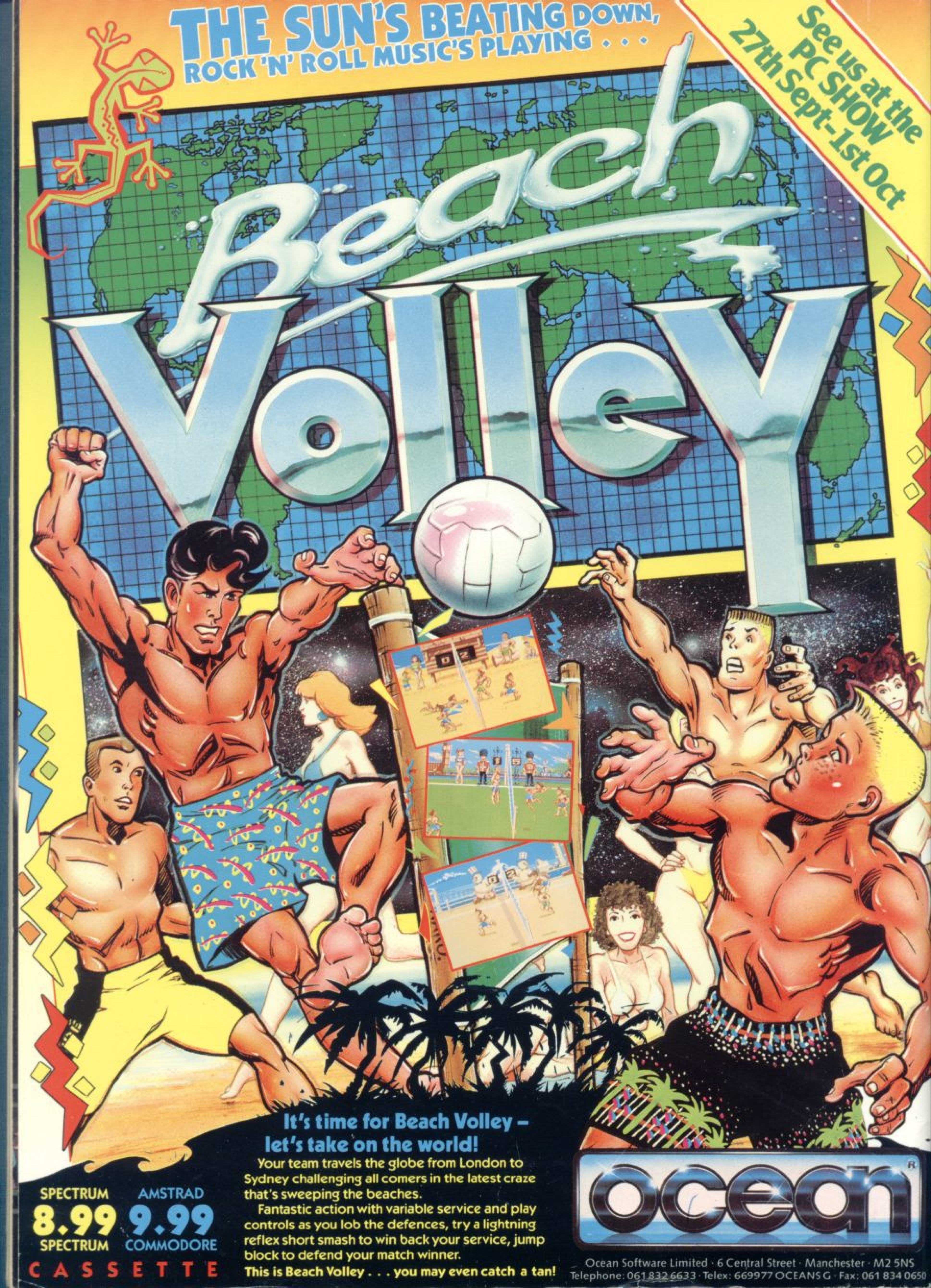
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